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STATVTES COMPYLED FOR THE BETTER OBSERVATION OF THE HOLY RVLE OF THE MOST GLORIOVS FATHER AND PATRIARCH S. BENEDICT

Confirmed by the ordinary Authoritie of the right honorable ād Reuer. Father in Chr. the Lo. MATTHIAS HOVIVS Archbishop of Macklin and Primate of the Netherlands &c. as alsoe by authority from the Pope his Holyneſſe delegated to him, and by him deliuered to the English Religious VVoemen of the Monaſtery of our bleſſed Lady the perpetuall Virgin Mary in Bruxelles and to all their Succeſſours;

Quis eſt homo qui timet Dominum; legem ſtatuet ei in via quam elegit. Pſal. 24.

VVhat a kinde of perſon is that, who feareth our lord hee will conſtitute him a law, for that State of life where of hee hath made choyce;

Printed att Gant by Ioos Doomᵉ.

THE FIRST PARTE OF THE STATVTES OF THOSE THINGS THAT Appertayne to common Discipline AND ARE TO BE OBSERVED OF ALL.

CHAPTER I.

Of Piety.

1. WHERE as the cheifest scope and end of Euery Religious Order is to aduance the Professours there of to the Saluation and spirituall perfection of their Soules, therefore all that enter this Congregation, must dilligently apply themselues, that by meete and conuenient, meanes, they may attrayne to the proposed end of their Vocation: the cheife meanes where of are, the exercises of true piety, and deuotion, as often prayer, meditation,

ditation, confession of their Sinnes, the holy Communion, and the Mortification of themselues;

2. Besides the tyme appoynted for the accomplishing of the deuyne Office, and reading of spirituall bookes, euery one shall each day imploy one whole hower in mentall prayer. the which tyme that they may fruytefully spend, to the comfort of their Soules; the Abbesse shall endeauour that thy may bee instructed by such spirituall men, as are well experienced in that godly exercise that they may not onely stirr vpp in themselues, such affections as may further them to vertue, but that they may alsoe the better discouer the illusions of the Ghostly Enemy and know how to auoyde them;

3. If any of the Religious bee found vn apt for this kinde of exercise, lett her bestow the afforesayd tyme, either in vocall prayer, or in some other deuoute imployment, according to the Iudgment of the Ghostly Father;

4. They shall confesse and Communicate once euery weeke, the which they shall doe alsoe vppon the cheifeste Feasts of the Church, and the Order; except the ghostly Father shall iudge some tymes otherwise, for some in perticuler, and more then this they may bee permitted; as the Abbesse

with the approbation of the Ghostly Father shall thinke good;

5. When they haue made their vowes and profession, for three dayes they shall receaue the holy Euchariſt; that they considering the greatneſſe of the benefitt which they haue receaued, they may become more gratefull to the king of heauen to whom they are eſpowſed.

6. Out of the tyme of Confeſſion none shall ſpeake with her ghoſtly Father vppon any pretence whatſoeuer, but in ſuch manner and tyme as to the Abbeſſe, and Superiour shall ſeeme meeteſt, and then leaue shalbee graunted to conferr with him ſoe oft, as the Abbeſſe or Superior shall perceaue that it will bee for her good, that requeſteth licence: which licence the Prioreſſe, Miſtris of the nouices, ād Cellarier may grante to thoſe that are vnder their ſeuerall Charges: ſoe that firſt they know the ghoſtly Father his opinion whether, and in what manner hee shall thinke it profitable for them;

7. The Lady Abbeſſe muſt ſett downe a certayne tyme for their confeſſions, and shee muſt ſee that all goe to one ghoſtly Father (whom the Bishopp shall appoynte them for that purpoſe) if the number will permitt it, otherwiſe shee with her Conuent shall

chooſe another approued by the Ordinary, vnto whom that parte of the Conuent shall confeſſe ; which the Abbeſſe shall thinke good to appoynte ;

8. None of the Religious shall preſume to cenſure her Confeſſor, either in the way of prayſing or diſcommending him before others, neither by Compariſon to prefer the one a boue the other, or to manifeſt their defects, but onely to the Abbeſſe ; and if hee haue giuen Counſayle or aduiſe to any of them, lett her not diſcouer it in any ſuch ſort, that any hurt or detrimēt may enſue thereof;

9. They shall all confeſſe to their Ordinary Ghoſtly Father, and to noe other, except the Abbeſſe giue them leaue, and all shall confeſſe twice or thrice euery yeare to that Preiſt that the moſt Reuerend lord Bishopp in ſpeciall manner for that purpoſe shall appoynte; alſoe the Lady Abbeſſe shall prouide ſome three or fower Preiſts (according to the number of the Couent) vnto whom, by her leaue they may confeſſe, as often as shee shall deeme fitting for their ſpirituall good, hauing notwithſtanding ſtill good regard, that shee diſturbe not the good order of her Monaſtery hereby; And this conformable to the decree of Clement the VIII. made for Superiours of Monaſteryes in the yeare of our lord 1594.

10. Let the Abbesse appoynte them a certayne tyme for the dayly examination of their Consciences, that thereby they may the better Consider of the state of their Soules, and what fruyte they reape by their holy Exercises;

11. If the Abbesse perceaue that some doe not soe much attend to their spirituall proffitt, as they should, and thereby giue her lesse satisfactiō, let her in a motherlike manner exhort them to vse more dilligence for the tyme to come, and therefore it will much proffitt them, that at lest once a yeare all the Religious liue retyred from the rest (but not all at one tyme) that they may the better Recollect and confirme themselues in Spirit, but this wilbee most expedient for them, that make lesse progresse and aduancement in vertue and Religious life;

12. None shall seeke for any spirituall aduise or receaue any such directions, but from those which the Abbesse shall approue neither shall shee receaue any Instructions for that purpose without the expresse consent of her sayd Superiour;

13. Lett the Abbesse haue especiall care that noe bookes that sauour not of a Religious Spirit, or which doe not helpe there vnto, bee at any tyme brought into the Monastery; And lett the Catoloque of all the

bookes of the Monaſtery bee examined of ſome learned diſcreete man, whoe may diſcerne whether they are profitable for Religious Spirits or noe, and lett her allow but ſome few for euery one, commaunding the reſt to bee kept by one of the Religious, to bee communicated vnto others as neede ſhall require;

14. None without the leaue of the Superiour ſhall vſe vppon herſelfe any Corporall auſteritie, ouer and aboue that which the rule and Statutes doe appoynte, or which the ghoſtly Father ſhall not approue; yet the Lady Abbeſſe may not onely permitt, but alſoe enioyne ſome auſteritie to her Religious Subiects, when ſhee ſhall Iudge it meete for their ſpirituall good;

15. If the Abbeſſe ſee any one of her Religious giuen to more auſteritie then the reſt, and to bee more feruent in her good Exerciſes, ſhee muſt endeauour to aduance and helpe her in her good deſires, yet ſoe that all bee done within the limitts, of prudence and diſcretion; And all the Religious of this Congregation are to vnderſtand that there is nothing appoynted in any other Religious Order, which may helpe for the increaſe of Gods holy Spiritt, which ſhall not alſoe bee moſt willingly permitted to them of this holy Congregation, if ſoe bee

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it shall bee thought expedient for them;

16. They that are permitted to vse vppon themselues any bodyly affliction, or mortification, must soe endeauour to conceale the same, that (as farr as lyeth in them) it may not bee knowne to the rest, except the Abbesse for some other good respects shall otherwise appoynte

17 Once euery weeke each one shall make a disciplyne for soe long a tyme as the Abbesse shall thinke good, and it is to be done on Friday at night, except the Abbesse some tyme shall appoynte some other day;

18. Although the Abbesse may apply the prayers and deuotions of her Religious, for the obtayning of gods assistance and grace, or for some other benefitt from his deuine goodnesse, yet shall shee bring in noe new obligations, but with great moderation, or with very great Consideration;

19. They shall say or sing their howers, and the deuyne office, according to the Romane vse, they shall say the litle Office of our blessed lady, the Office of the deade, the Graduall Psalmes, the seuen penetentiall Psalmes, and Litanies, in such sort as is appoynted in the breuiary of Rome;

20. They shall sing the Mattines, laudes & the rest of the howers vppō the principalleſt Feasts of the yeare, kept either by the

precept of the Church; or vppon Custome, vppon the Feasts of their Patrones; and Patroneſſes, both of their Order and of their perticuler Churches, and of the Feast of the dedication of the same, alsoe they are to sing euery day their conuentuall Masse, except the Abbesse for iust causes for a tyme ordayne otherwayes, both in these latter, as alsoe in the former Solemnities; Once euery weeke a Masse of the holy Ghost is to bee sung, or sayd, and as often as the Office of the blessed Virgin is sayd on the Saturdayes, soe often a Masse is to bee celebrated of our blessed Lady, for this end that the Conuent may obtayne of our lord spirituall progresse and aduancement

22. Whyle they sing, or say the deuyne Office, lett them obserue due grauitie and Modesty, and decent compositon of their cariage, neither may they post ouer their seruice, but they must pronounce each worde with moderate leisure, distinctly, and truly, and with soe loude a voyce, that they may bee well herd and vnderstoode by those that are out of the Quire;

23. None may intreate or labour to haue leaue to intone or reade any thing, but as it shall bee appoynted her, neither may shee any wise refuse any thing that shee is willed to sing or reade, except shee first make know

her impediment to the Superiour; to whoſe Commaundement shee is wholly to ſubmitt her ſelfe;

24. They may ſome tymes vſe Muſicke in the deuyne office, yet it muſt bee with great Moderation, togeather with the good edification of the hearers, and only ſuch Songs they are to ſing as are truly graue and modeſt;

25. If vppon iuſt hindrance any shalbee abſent from the other Canonicall howers, yett all muſt bee preſent at Complyne, except ſome vrgent Cauſe shall excuſe them, or that the Abbeſſe shall iudge ſome other buſineſſe to bee more neceſſary and important;

CHAPTER 2.

Of Pouertie;

1. ALL ſuch as make their profeſſion of Religion in this Congregation, muſt vnderſtand that they can haue nothing in propriety, euen as the Rule hath enacted; what ſoeuer therefore is giuen them by ther frends and kinsfolkes, is to bee applyed to the vſe of the Conuent and Communitie; But if the Abbeſſe will permitt any to haue

any

any thing of ſmale price as a memory of their Frends, it may not bee any thing that is made of gould or Siluer, and much leſſe of pretious ſtones, ſett either in gould or Siluer;

2. Goulden or Siluer Veſſells may not bee vſed in this Congregation, except for the Church or Infirmary, and for this latter in meane and ſmale quantitie and number; Neither may the Abbeſſe vſe ſuch Veſſell in her Cell, or in the Refectory, but this may bee permitted for the intertaynment of Gueſtes, (when it shalbee thought expedient to vſe any ſuch entertaynment) yet with this moderation, that in them all vanitie and ſecular pompe is to bee eschewed;

3. They muſt auoyde all notable ſingularitie and curioſitie in their apparell, Images, and all other Furniture of their Cells, and they are to haue only thoſe things, which beſitt religious decency, and are for their health, and they muſt willingly imbrace what ſoeuer appertayneth to their diett and Apparell according to true Religious pouertie;

4. There woolen or linnen apparell may not bee made of any fine Coſtly Cloath, yea though itt bee giuen them, or bee by their parents beſtowed vppon them, but they are to weare thoſe things, that are of a moderate price, and are laſting;

5. They shall not giue or receaue one of another

another any thing, without the lady Abbesse o the Superiours licence, yet the Prioresse, Mistresse of the Nouices, and Celarier may some tyme giue leaue to those that are vnder their charge, to giue or take one of another, some matter of litle moment or value;

6. Let none begg any thing of her frēds or Parents, for her proper vse, but if her frēds or Parents will giue any thing, lett it bee soe done that it may bee applyed to the Communitie, or left to the will and disposition of the Abbesse, that shee may bestow it vppon them as shee shall thinke good;

7. It may not bee lawfull to lend or grāt any thing appertayning to the Monastery to any abroade, without leaue from the Abbesse;

8. Each Religious shall once euery yeare (to witt before the first Sunday in lent) goe to the lady Abbesse and with due humilitie and reuerence declare vnto her, that what soeuer they haue, they willingly offer it vnto her, leauing it to her Will, whether shee will suffer them to retayne, restore, or otherwise dispose ther of in the best sort, as in our lord, shee shall thinke most meete, and if the Abbesse will take a vew of each thing in perticuler, they shall bring them all vnto her, in all Fidelitie, neither may they haue any thing locked

ked vpp in Cheſtes or Coffers, without the leaue and knowledge of the Abbeſſe;

9. And to the end euery one may ſtrictly and carefully keepe their vow of pouerty, it is enacted, that if any after her death (which God forbidd) should bee found a Proprietary and to haue any thing of notable value for her vſe, or in the Cuſtody of any other, without the Abbeſſes knowledge, shee shalbee infallably depriued of Chriſtian Buriall;

CHAPTER 3.

Of Chaſtitie;

IT is very fitt the Spouſes of Chriſt imitate all Angelicall puritie, which may conſerue in them the integritie of their bodyes and myndes; therefore they muſt fly all ſuch things which may any wayes cauſe any impreſſion in their myndes, contrary to puritie

2. They shall conceale noe greiueous temptation, which they shall not manifeſt to their ghoſtly Father yea and to their immediate Superiour, or to the Abbeſſe, if they thinke they may receaue from them any comfort or helpe; lett them shew all modeſty and humilitie in their wordes, Countenances, geſtures, and Actions, and lett them behaue

behaue themſelues each to others with due reſpect, and Religious grauitie, and euery one is to behould as it were Chriſt himſelfe in her Siſter;

CHAPTER 4.

Of Obedience;

1. AS the Religious haue vowed to God and to their Superiours themſelues, and whatſoeuer els they haue, ſoe muſt they ſuffer themſelues to bee guyded and gouerned by their Abbeſſe, and Superiour, as the Interpretours of Gods holy will; therefore let them wholy giue themſelues to perfect holy obedience, and let them labour to bee excellent in the ſame, not onely willingly and promptly, performing thoſe things that are enioyned them, but fullfilling them in ſuch ſorte and fashion, as they thinke to bee moſt conformable to the Superiours Will;

2. Euery one muſt bee ready to vndergoe all baſe Offices and exerciſes, what ſoeuer the Abbeſſe shall thinke good to impoſe vppon them, neither may they thinke themſelues exempt from this by any office, degree or Qualitie, nor may they expect any priuiledge

ledge, but in case of Necessitie onely, but euery one is to know that all are to liue equally vnder one and the selfe same Rule of Obedience, without exception of any persons or person;

3. When the Superiour commaundeth any thing, that may bee hurtfull to their health, or an hindrance of a greater good, or that it cannot bee performed within the tyme allotted them, then let them soe manifest the difficultie to her, that yet withall, they leaue all to her Iudgment and discretion, and soe obey, if it may bee done without manifest Sinne;

4. If any should request any thing of her Superiour which shee thinketh needefull for the health of her body or Soule, or for the performance of any duty and charge enioyned her, lett her first commend the matter to God, and with a resigned mynde lett her open the case to the Superiour, and after it hath beene some two or three tymes denyed her, lett her neuer mention the matter more, except shee verely thinke, her Superiour hath for gott it, and that shee will take it well, that shee bee put in mynde there of;

5. They shall not onely obey the Lady Abbesse, but alsoe all others of the Conuent, whether they bee of the Quire or Conuerse)

whoe

whoe from her receaue power and Authoritie, otherwise none may commaund, or reprehend another, without expresse leaue from the Abbesse, and of her shee is to vnderstand how farr shee may proceede in commaunding, or in her reprehension.

6. If any bee commaunded any thing by the subordinate Superiour, which is different from that which the cheife Superiour or Abbesse did commaunde or apoynte, let the Inferiour manifest to the Subordinate her Superiours Will, and Order, and lett her without further Contradiction reuerently obey, if shee see her persist and continew in her commaunde, but let the subordinate afterwards informe her Superiour of the Case if any error or fault happen thereby.

7. If at any tyme happyly the subordinate Superiours, commaunde diuersly any one, in things appertayning to their charges, lett them represent their difficulties, each one to the other, without all contention: and if the case soe require it, with externall and mutuall shew of Reuerence, lett them remitt it to the arbitrement of the Abbesse, or Superiour laying barely open the Case without further dispute, and soe lett them thinke that to bee best which the Abbesse or Superiour, sufficiently informed, shall iudge to bee soe;

8. What soeuer is denyed by any subordinate Snperiour, shee may not aske the same of the Abbesse, except alsoe shee declare vnto her, that the Subordinate Superiour did deny it, togeather with the reason of her sayd deniall, soe far as shee knoweth or can guesse;

9. They are to obey her that commaundeth anything in the lady Abbesses name, although in very deede shee haue noe such authoritie soe to commaunde, and ordinarily in their Commaundements, they are rather to vse the Abbesses name, then their owne, except onely the mother Prioresse, Mistresse of the Nouices, and Cellarier, towards those of their charge;

CHAPTER 5.

Of the Inclosure;

1. THey must haue a speciall care of keeping their Inclosure, soe much commended and (with vehement words expressing the necessitie thereof) commaunded by the sacred Counsell of Trent: moreouer seing they haue bound themselues by vow to the obseruation thereof, they must hold it necessary to bee kept;

2. Their

2. Their Incloſure muſt bee enuyroned with high Walls, which may contayne that parte of the Church, to witt the Quyre allotted to their proper vſe, togeather with the Cloyſter dormitory Refectory, andall the Offices and buyldings, which are appertayning to the proper vſe of the profeſſed Religious; togeather with the Gardens, Orchards, and ſuch like, ſoe that none from abroade may enter into this Incloſure, by any Stayres, or Gates, but onely by one dore or Gate, if it may bee any wiſe ſo contriued commodiouſly;

3. Noe profeſſed Religious may goe out of this Incloſure; but vppon conſtraynte of Fyre, extreme famyne, Warr, ruyne of the buyldings, and ſuch like greueous dangerous caſes, and for other Caſes approued vppon vrgent neceſſitie, or commaunded by the lord Bishopp, or the Viſitor; yet when the Schollers of Religion are to receaue their Religious habitt, or the Nouices are to make their Profeſſion, the Abbeſſe with ſome few of her Religious, may goe out of the Quier, and enter into the outward parte of the Church, that they may aſſiſt them in that ſolemne Action; which is alſoe permitted to the Abbeſſe newly choſen, that with a decent Company of her Religious, shee may alſoe enter the ſame, to receaue the

Bishopps Benediction : for which, and for some other necessary Causes and vses, there may bee a Conuenient passage betwixt the Quier and the outward Church.

4. All that are not Religious or not of the Conuent of what sex, age, or Condition soeuer they bee, may not enter into the Inclosure but vppon necessary Causes, approued and licenced by the Bishopp in writing, without which licence according to the decree of the Counsayle of Trent, both the person that entreath, and the person that admitteth him, incurreth the payne of Excommunication;

5. Other Religious weomen of the same Order liuing vnder these Statutes, being sent by their Superiours to some other place, may in their passage be receaued in to any Monastery of this Congregation, and therein they may stay for two or three dayes, or longer, as according to prudence and Charitie it shalbee thought conuenient;

6. The Visitours accompanyed with certayne modest and graue Clergy men may enter in, to performe their Visitation, or for any other necessary businesse;

7. When the ghostly Father entreth into the Monastery to visite the sicke, or for some other necessary matter, one or two Religious appoynted by the Abbesse for that purpose

poſe shall allwayes bee preſent with him, and if any Religious bee to bee buryed, ſoe many from abroade may bee preſent at that Office, as shalbee thought needefull.

8. The Phiſition, Surgeon, Workemen, Gardiners, Porters, Carters, Maſons, and all ſuch as haue any neceſſary imployments within the Monaſtery may bee ſuffred to enter; they muſt keepe accompt in what number they enter, that in the ſame number they may departe, and thoſe that enter muſt bee accompanyed by two or three of the Religious to thoſe places where they are to bee ymployed, none of the Religious may approach to thoſe that are entred without the expreſſe licence of the Abbeſſe, the which not withſtanding shee may not graunt to any one alone.

9. When the people from abroade haue leaue to ſpeake with the Religious, lett it bee done at a Grate when neede shall require, within the Grate lett a Curtayne hang which may ſoe hang shutt, or bee drawne to lett the Religious bee ſeene, or not to bee ſeene, as the Abbeſſe shall thinke beſt expedient.

10. In the place where the Religious make their Confeſſions, lett a Cloth bee ſoe drawne and faſtned, that the penitent may

not seethe Ghostly Father, nor yet bee seen by him; All that the Religious are to receaue into the Inclosure, lett them receaue it by a Turne, except it bee of that kinde, that by the Turne they cannot receaue it; the Turne with in must bee locked and made fast, in such sort that it may not bee tourned about, but at such tymes as any thing is to bee receaued in thereby;

CHAPTER 6.

Of Silence;

1. IN such places and tymes as soueraigne silence is to bee kept; (to witt, in the dormitory, Refectory, Chapter house, Quier, and Cloyster, and in the howers assigned for silence, as are to bee seene afterwards in the twelueth Chapter, and in the 7. 8. and 9. Numbers, and after Complyne vntill Prime ended, none may speake but vppon vrgent necessitie, and that by noe other meanes shee can expresse her meaning, and make her selfe vnderstoode, for then shee may speake, but yett with a low voyce and with all breuitie;

2. At what tyme they worke togeather in the Common workehouse they may speake, but yett onely of things necessary

and

and with a low voyce;

3. If any should seeke for another, lett her goe and seeke her, but without noyse, ād shee may not call her with a loude voyce, and if shee finde her with others, lett her deliuer vnto her the Superiours commaundement, that others may not vnderstand it, and shee that is called for to another place, lett her giue notice thereof to the Superiour of that place to the end shee may know whether shee goeth;

4. Soe often as they speake togeather, they must haue good care that they may not bee heard out of the place where they are at that present; In their Recreations (when they are permitted them) lett them bee soe myndefull of modesty and Religious decency, that one push and thrust not another, noe nor soe much as touch her, soe farr as lyeth in her; In their speeches and Conuersation lett them auoyde and fly all shew of contempt and litle esteeme of others, all kinde of mocking, and scoffings, and all other things what soeuer, whereby either throughe their wordes or actions, any kinde of occasion of brabble or displeasure may arise;

5. And for as much as here mention is made of the Recreations of the Religious; it is prohibited that within the Inclosure

any kinde of beasts bee kept or fedd, but for the vse of the Communitie, and not for the priuate Recreation of any one alone, neither vppon any coulor or pretext what soeuer may they permitt any dwarfes, Idiotes, or young Infants to bee nourished or brought vpp within the Incloſure.

6. Their mutuall conuerſation muſt bee vſed for their health, and Conſeruation of Charitie, and therefore it muſt bee vſed in publike, and not in Corners, or in their Cells nether may the Religious vſe any ſpeech of ſuch matters, which they haue heard of ſecular people abroade, except they bee of ſuch, which may yeald Edification, and ſpirituall Comfort and proffitt to the hearers.

7. In their Conuerſation lett thē ſo shew loue and Charitie to euery one, that withall they take good regard that they shew not themſelues mare ſingularely affected to one then to another, and lett them doe reuerence to euery one, according as their State shall require, neither may they shunn the ſpeech and Conuerſation of any whoe ſoeuer.

8. They muſt bee very carefull that they talke not of their Stocke, and Nobilitie of their kindred, nor of plightes, Controuerſies and debates, among their Parents, kindred, and Families, or diſpute of them, yea they may

may not admitt any talke among themselues (but with great waryneſſe) of the Iarrs or enmities that one Prouince or Country hath with another.

9. None may ſpeake of the imperfection of any other, but onely to the Abbeſſe, or Superiour, or to thoſe from whom they may expect helpe and redreſſe; and if any damage or hindrance by any ones defect, may bee thought to fall vnto the Monaſtery, and that by noe other way it can bee remedied, all shalbee bound to informe the Abbeſſe there of, that in good tyme both the hurt that may befall vnto any perſon in perticuler, or the miſcheife that may happen to the whole Conuent in generall may bee hindred.

10. None shall heare any thing of any Religious vppon Bond of ſecrecy, and vppō that Condition that the Abbeſſe may not know it, yea rather they ought to hould it a thing right grate full and pleaſing to them, that shee should bee informed of all matters that may any wayes aduance, and ſett forward the good gouernment of the Monaſtery.

11. None may enter into the Office or Cell of another, without leaue, or vppon commaundement of the Superiour, and nether may they then enter, before they haue giuen a ſigne by knocking at the doare and

haue receaued an answeare to enter, lett the dore stand open soe long, as they talke and bee togeather within, except the Superiour doe expressely appoynte it otherwise;

12. Whyle they speake one to another, or of another, they may not call them by their bare names, but the Abbesse, Prioresse, Mistris of the Nouices, and Celarier shall call their Subiects Sisters, the professed of the Quier shall call alsoe the Conuerse Sisters; but the professed of the Quier, must call them dames speaking of others that are professed of the Quier, the Prioresse must bee called of all Mother; the Mistrisse, of her Nouices must bee called Mistrisse, the Cellarier is alsoe to bee called Mother of those that are vnder her charge; But the Abbesse of all is to bee named lady: that by these names due honour and Reuerence may bee yealded each one in that Vocatiõ, ād degree in which shee is placed by our lord ād Sauiour Christ;

13. As they meete one with another lett them doe Reuerence each one to the other by an Inclination and bending of their bodyes, and lett each one endeauour to preuent the other with honour according to due Religious modesty; and all though the Iuniour professed ought principally to vse this preuention to her elders, and more Ancient in Religion by honoring and Reue-

rencing

rencing them, yet none but Superiours may exact it of them;

14. Inspeaking lett none vnmannerly interrupt anothers speech, or in twight her Sister of Errours: but in there Conuersation lett them bee myndfull to vse all due modesty, and decent cariage, with all Ciuilitie auoyding both in their Words and behauiour, all Rudenesse, sowernesse, or lightnesse, as alsoe all secular vanity and affectation: which noe wayes standeth with the grauitie, which appertayneth, vnto Religious persons; let alsoe their speech bee very sparing, and for the most part lett it bee about spirituall matters, or at lestwise about such matters as may sauour of spiritt, and nourish the same;

15. In their going and shutting of the doores, lett them make noe noyse, as much as lyeth in thē, but this they must beware of in tyme of soueraigne Sylence, and whē the Religious are at their reading ād meditaion;

16. When any (hauing obtayned leaue) visitt the Sicke, lett her soe behaue herselfe, that shee may recreate and ease them; and to the end shee may not bee trouble some vnto them, shee must first learne of the Infirmare by what meanes hee may best Cōfort them, and auoyde to bee greiuous to thē

17. When secular people come, and (by

the

the Superiours permiſſion) ſpeake with the Religious at the Grate, lett them ſignify vnto the Abbeſſe either by themſelues, or by ſuch as are appoynted to accompauy them, thoſe things whereof they had talke as the matter ſhall require; And then let them auoyde long conference, if it may bee done without offence, or except the matter bee of that moment and conſequence, that longer ſpeach may bee permitted.

18. Whyle they ſpeake with ſecular people, and thoſe that come vnto them from abroade; if the Prefect of the Turne, or her Companion cannot bee preſent, let them haue another appoynted by the Superiour, who may heare and ſee all that is ſpoken and done, who may neuer departe or leaue them alone till the ſpeech bee fully ended.

19. Although nothing ordinarely ought to bee ſayd which they would not haue herd and vnderſtoode, yet when the caſe requireth Secrecy, and that the Religious cannot goe commodiouſly to the Abbeſſe, lett her requeſt leaue by the Thourere to ſpeake in ſecrett, and by her lett her deliuer the cauſes for which shee requireth ſuch ſecrett conference, and of her shee is to expect an anſweare how shee muſt proceede.

20. If any Religious bee not permitted to ſpeake with any at the Greate, none may tell

tell her that shee was called for by any abroade, and that shee was denyed to speake with them.

21. None may speake with people abroade of the domesticall affayres of the Monastery, except they bee such matters as euery one may well vnderstand them, or which they know the Superiour will not bee vnwilling they should bee made knowne vnto them: and if any Externe should requeste the assistance of any of the Religious in any affayre, yet lett her not take vppon her to doe or write any thing without the lycence the Abbesse;

22. Whyle the Religious are in the speaking place, lett them speake with soe lowa voyce, that they may bee onely heard of their Companions, and of the persons with whó they speake; More ouer lett them endeauour to behaue them selues there with all edification, and to apply some parte at lest of their talke to a spirituall end, neither lett them show that in such Conuersation they seeke for their omne priuate solace and Comfort, but rather for the Comfort of those that come to Visitt them, finally lett them soe bestow that tyme vppon others, that at the first peale they depart to the Quiar, from which none may bee absent, without the expresse licence of the Abbesse or Superiour;

23. In

23. In lent and in tyme of Aduent this accesse of externes may not bee permitted, as neither vppon the dayes of Confession and Communion, and then the Religious may not bee seene of them, if vppon any occasion they bee permitted to speake with them except some important great reason shall require the contrary;

CHAPTER 7.

Of the Fasts, and the Common diett;

1. IN Aduent they must fast except the Sundayes, on which they obserue abstinence, and from Quinquagesima Sunday, included vntill Easter (excepting all Sundayes) they shall Fast, and abstayne from white meates; except the approued Custome of the Country, and the dearth of lenten meates doe perswade otherwise;

2. From Septuagesima included vntill Quinquagesima they shall abstayne from all flesh, in which tyme vppon Mundayes, Vednesdayes ād fridays they shall fast, except some double Feasts fall on those days; Alsoe frō the Feast of the Ascention of our lord excluded, vntill the Vigil of Penticost they shall keepe Abstinence;

3. From

3. From the Feasts of the Natiuity of our blessed lady excluded, vntill Easterthey shall fast euery wednesday and from the Kalends of Nouember excluded, they shall fast alsoe Mundayes, except vppon those ferias (out of lent) a double Feast bee celebrated ;

4. From the Feast of the Resurrection of our Sauiour Christ, tillthe Feast of the Natiuity of our blessed Virgin Mary included they may receaue twoe Refections euery day excepting Notwithstanding Fridayes, on which they shall obserue the approued Custome of the Prouince where in they liue, or els they shall fast ;

5. They must appoynte the howers of their Meales according to the Differences of the tymes of the yeare, or according to the diuine Seruice, and the holy Office of the Masse, as is sett downe in the Roman Missal

6. In the Fasts and abstinences of the Rule and Statutes, the Abbesse may dispence with such as are weake, and aged, and whēsoeuer any perticuler reason may perswade her there vnto, soe that Flesh bee not eaten in the Refectory, and that the grant passe not into a custome: but vppon those dayes that are bidden by the Church, their approbatio bee required who haue authoritie according to the Custome of each

Vnless at a table part.

7. Vppon due Consideration of the paynes and labours that are to bee sustayned in this Congregation, as alsoe of the Sex, but especially of the weake Complextions, and educations of very many which are admitted into this order those things that appertayne to their dyett, are so to bee moderated and tempered, that the Religious may with more strength goe forward in the performance of the deuine Seruices, and burthens of their Institute, and with more alacrity perseuer and continue in the same; therfore ordinaryly vppon Sundayes, Tuesdayes, and Thursdays through out the yeare, as alsoe vppon Christmasse day falling vppon a friday, or Saturday, they may eate flesh, excepting hereafter according to the Rule they shall altogeather abstaine from flesh.

8. The measure of their meate and [illegible]inke shall depend vppon the Iudgment of [illegible]e Abbesse, and as shee is not to permitt [illegible]m any superfluyty in their dyett, soe is [illegible]e alsoe to haue care that nothing bee [illegible]nting according to Religious decency, an[illegible]ch persons necessity, as on the cõtrary sh[illegible]o haue a speciall regard, that whilst sh[illegible]auoreth to priuide for euery one in[illegible]cessaryes, shee permitt not superfl[illegible] and take place amongst them yet

yet ordinarely when they eate flesh, shee may giue to each one an Antipast, or sallet, a pitance of flesh of halfe a pound, and a post past in fruyte, or some what els in steade of fruyte, when thy fast, besides the afore sayde (if they may bee had) lett her endeauour or giue vnto the Conuent what may bee gotten, or may well serue for their necessitie. If besides this the Phisition thinke any thing more, and aboue to bee giuen to any or that their necessitie or infirmity doe require any thing in perticuler, lett her endeauour to performe it towards them, with all pitty, charitie, and alacritie, soe that it bee not done in the Common Refectory, but either at the Superiours or *infirme table* or in the Infirmary;

9. Out of tymes of Refection they may not eate or drinke any thing, without the leaue of the Superiour, neither may they refuse those things that are appoynted them by their Superiour for their health and comfort, yet in these things the Prioresse, Mistresse of the Nouices, and Cellarer ir may giue leaue vnto those that are vnder their seuerall Charges;

10. If by experience it bee found, that the Comon dyett is not whole some for some lett that bee made knowne to the Abbesse, who shall prouide therefore, as in our lord

shee shall thinke good, and shee shall euery yeare declare vnto the Visitor what forme and manner shee obserueth in these things and withall lett her not suffer any to keepe any sweet meates, conserues, or Confections in their Cells, except the Phisition thinke that they must haue often vse thereof;

CHAPTER 8.

Of the Apparell of the Religious and of those things that appertaine to their bedding;

1. FOR their apparell they may vse that which the Abbesse (hauing regard of tymes and places) shall approue;

2. Besides the vppee or greate habitt they may haue two vnder Coates whereof the one or both in Winter may bee lyned with Furr;

3. The greate habitt must bee longer then their other Garments, which must reach to the ground, yet it may not bee soe long that it may hinder them in going, or bee dragged on the ground, and soe worne; and soe it must bee made, that the sleeues must bee three foote large, and what soeuer couereth the

the body must bee loose;

4. This greate habitt must bee blacke, and soe must the Scapular, and inward coate next to the Scapulare, if they vse any other coates or garments, it shall litle importe of what colour they bee, soe they bee either white, or blake or some other brownish or darke Colour;

5. Their Cloathes which are vnder their scapulare must bee open from the shoulders downe to the girdle and soe clasped, and for their sleeues they must not bee two wide, nor yet soe straight that they may not put their hands easely into each sleeue; neither in any of their garments may they vse any buttons or any silke;

6. They must not haue or weare any linnē next their bodyes, without leaue from the Abbesse or Superiour, or except their necessitie, or health should otherwise require;

7. The habitts of the Conuerse Sisters must bee like that of the Quiar: excepting onely that the sleeues of their greate habitt must bee straighter by the halfe and when they weare their greate habitt they must gird them to their bodyes;

8. All must put on their greate habitt when they goe to the Quier, Refectory, Chapter house, and speaking place, in such sort and soe ofte as in their Ceremonyes is expressed

9. Euery one must haue a note of all their Cloathes, where of the Guardroabe must haue a Coppy, that they may bee able to render an accompt of them, when it shall bee demaunded; they may not sett any letters of their names on their Vayles or Garments which they are to weare, but rather certayne numbers or other Caracters, they must not bee two carefull of hauing new Cloathes, but lett them permitt themselues to bee prouided for herein, by the Abbesse, as in other matters;

10. At what tyme soeuer they shal chance to haue a new Garment, they must giue vpp their old, neither must they bee desirous to haue more then may bee seruiceable for their health, and necessitie and what soeuer cloathes they receaue, lett them haue regard to keepe them carefully, and clenly as those things that appertayne to the poore of Christ;

11. In the night they are to take their rest in their Cloathes, hauing on their Scapulars, and stokens that they may bee the readyer to rise vnto mattins; The professed must weare their white and blake Veyles, but the Nouices must sleepe in their white: yet when the heates are greate, or when they are sicke, they may leaue of their Cloathes and stokens and lay their Scapulars on their bedds, yet

may

may they not then bee without their Veyles, and they are dilligently to keepe, and obserue all other things what soeuer is appoynted and set downe in the holy Rule;

12. Euery one must sleepe apart vppon a straw and a Wollen Matrice: for their Coueretts and Curtaynes they must stand there in to the Iudgment of the Abbesse in what sort they are to haue them: they must ly in Wollen, except through the Indisposition of their Corporall health, the Abbesse shall thinke otherwise;

13. Those that are in health may not haue the vse of Feathers but in their pillowes, which may bee couered with linnen Pillow beeres, and they may admitt nothing in their Cloathing or bedding, which hath any shew of singularitie: but onely they may haue such things as are of a meane price, and best indureth;

CHAPTER 9.

Of letters and Messages.

1. NOe Religious may receaue any letters writings or tokens, either for her selfe or for any other, for that is the Office onely of the keeper of the Parlow; What soeuer is deliuered, the Abbesse or

by her permission the Prioresse shall see, and they shall deliuer or retayne it as they shall thinke good: neither may any tell that such letters or tokēs were brought to any, except the Abbesse or Prioresse (by the consent of the Abbesse) shall iudge otherwise!

2 When they write to their frends, lett them study to write those things which bee seeme their state and profession, and lett them doe it discreetly and prudently, that the ir frends may receaue Edification, and spirituall proffitt from them.

3. They must not bee very easy to write often to their frends, or parentes, except vppon necessitie, or for some spirituall good that may seeme to ensue thereof, yea a Religious person ought to bee very sparing in that kinde, as benig one dead to the world, and that desyreth onely to liue to Christ alone.

4 They may not write to their frends or parents before they haue leaue, neither may they prepare for them any tokens, without the knowledge of the Abbesse, and without her consent; It is also forbidden all of them, to bestow any Newyeares gift vppon any; yet the Abbesse may send somewhat to the Common Frends of the Monastery or bestow somewhatt vppon others inway of gratitude!

What

5. What writings letters, or Tokens soeuer they are to send lett them de liuer to the Abbesse and lett them leaue it to her iudgment, whether shee will send them or noe; neither afterwards may they curiously inquire in what sort shee disposed of them!

6. None may carry any Messages or Salutations from people abroade to any of the Monastery without the Abbesse commaunde them soto doe!

CHAPTER 10.

Of the Chapter;

1. The Chapters were instituted and appoynted for the exercise of humilitie, Conservation of Monasticall discipline, and for the aduancement of the Common good of the Conuent: There fore very great heede must bee taken that the peace tranquillitie, and due subordination (whereby increase of spiritt, and due orders is wont to bee gotten and conser ved) may not thereby bee disturbed!

2. Once enery weeke Chapter is to bee kept, and that vppon friday, except some solemne Feaste fall vppon that day, for then it must bee kept vppon Manday, or Wednesday not hindred with the like

Feast except some of the ensuing Vigils come that weeke, or some other iust occasion hinder it;

3. They are to meete in Chapter vppon the Vigils of Christmasse, and Easter and the Assention of our lord, and on the Vigiles of Penticost of the Assumption of our blessed lady, and of the Patrone of their Order, and of their Church, and so often like wise as the Abbesse shall thinke good wherein they are to performe the things that are sett downe in their Ceremonyes, both for the manifesting of their defects, and for the Correction there of, as alsoe for the ordering businesses, and affayres as may occurr!

4. In the Chapter the Religious are to accuse them selues of the breach of their Rule, or Statuts, or of their negligences or defects, which when they doe, lett them doe it in such sorte, that those that heare and see them, may bee edefyed by the Exemple of their humilitie! if it may bee doubted whether they may bee rather offended then edifyed, lett them not accuse themselues in publik thereof, vntill they haue consulted with the Superiour about the same!

5. Ordinarely they are to accuse themselues of those things that they committed in publike, or which they thinke in tyme will come to the notice of others; therefore lett them

them no publish their secrett faults, and defects, except the matter bee of smale moment, or for their greater mortification, or which they thinke may proue of great edification vnto others, which notwithstanding they shall first declare vnto the Superiour, that from her they may haue leaue to doe the same!

6. It properly apperteyneth to the Prioresse, Mistris of the Nouices, and Cellarier to informe the Abbesse of those persons that are subiect vnto them, and to accuse them in the Chapter, although others of the Religious also may, and must in forme the Abbesse about them, when they see any thing committed domageable for the spirituall good of any or contrary to the common good, or reputation of the Conuent, or that they perceaue that these things are not marked by others, or to bee neglected by them!

7. If any bee commanded to accuse another let her doe it with due modesty, moderation laying aside all bitternesse of myndes, and exageration of Wordes, but rather see they doe it with great shew of Charitie, and beneuolence!

8. In the Chapter none may bee accused of any fault, which is onely knowne to the accuser her selfe, or which cannot bee proued by the Testimony of two at the least,

yet all may tell the Abbesse or Superiour of the Faults of any, though neuer soe secrett, except perhapps priuate admonition, may more proffitt the offendors, and therefore may wel suffice, whereby it may bee Iudged to bee preferred and first to bee vsed! yea euery one is to know that it is most seuerely prohibited them to accuse any, or blame them to the Superious, without sufficient ground and knowledge of the matter!

9. None may either by worde or deede tax any Sister, or gird at them for any fault, or defect, whereof they haue beene admonished by the Abbesse, or Superiour or for which they cõiecture or suspect that they haue beene reprehended, or punished: for they are to thinke that that admonition, reprehension, or Correction proceeded of Charitie, togeather with an intention to vphold good discipline and Order; and that it was alsoe receaued of the party offendent, with full purpose to amend and reforme her selfe thereof, for the tyme to come!

10. The Sister accused may not refute the saying of her that accuseth her, except the Superiour commaund her to declare the State of the matter; neither may they contend, or presume afterwards to brabble amongst thẽ selues vnder punishment of a great Pennance, which the Superiour is to impose on them;

them; which thing is alsoe to bee obserued, when any may chance to bee accused out of the Chapter, As the faults where of they are accused, some are greater, then other some; in like manner for the better auoyding and redressing of them, greater and smaler penances are to bee enioined, which is left for the most parte to the Discretion of the Superior, to enioyne such penances for euery offence which may bee thought conuenient who is to haue regard shee seeke not to afflict or trouble any but rather to endeauor their amendment for the greater honour of God, and her Charges proffitt, None must thinke them selues exempt from these Penances, but as all are tyed to the same Rule and Statutes, soe must they thinke them selues subiect to the same Penances, for their negligences in obseruation of disciplyne, or exercising vertue: and there fore the Abbesse may not in these things bee more indulgent or fauoureable to one, then to another, but shee is to beare an euen hand ouer all, seeking for the spirituall good and proffitt of all.

12. For as much as Penances are not onely to bee giuen for the correction of faultes, but for the exercise of Vertues, and mortification of their Passions (as hath bee ne sayd) there fore whoesoeuer shalbee reprehended

ded at any tyme by the Abbesse or Superiour, or shall by them receaue any Pennance for any Fault, for which the Rule or Statutes haue sett downe nothing expresselv, lett her giue noe shew of impatience, soe farr fort as lyeth in her, nether lett her frame answeares, or excuses for her selfe except perhapps the reasons of those things for which shee is reprehended and punished; bee demanded of her, or that somewhat bee to bee revealed which was not knowne, but let her endure all without murmuration, and with as great peace of mynde as shee may much lesse it may bee lawfull for any to excuse her that is reprehended, and (esperially in her presence) seeke to extenuate her fault, although shee may after wards certify the Abbesse of all that hath passed; if soe bee that it may seeme soe expedient; And to the end all occasion of murmuring may bee taken away none may complayne to any of the Religious, or to any other person, but onely to her from whom shee may expect redresse, and if any feele any disgust for any matter, lett her make her recourse to the lady Abbesse, or to the Superiour, who shall with Compassion giue eare to her Playntes, and performe that towards her which shalbee iudged to bee according to Iustice!

13. If shee that is penanced, or any other

for

for her at some tyme, will not confer about her with the Superiour or Abbesse, for that they may thinke that they cannot deale with them in such free manner as were necessary, then may they goe to the Assistants, or to some one of them, and make knowne to them those things, whereof they would haue their Abbesse or Superior to bee informed

14. For smaller faults such penances as these following may bee enioyned by the Abbesse or Superiour vnto the offenders as the sayd Superiours shall thinke good: to witt certayne prayers, knee ling on the ground, and eating on the same, to serue in the Refectory or Kitchin, to abstaine from some parte of their meate, and such like And if any committ often any error, or through Custome or contempt fall into greater trespasses, shee may bee punisted with fasting, with publick or priuate disciplynes, and with other such like Chastisements yet noe Religious may giue a discipline to an other, but the offendor is to inflict it vppon her selfe, except the Abbesse for some great cause doe otherwise appoynte l

15. For most greweous faults let those things bee done, which are appoynted in another place for the correction of such faults, without exception or regard had to any degree, or Office what soeuer, although wee hope

hope that (throughe the grace of God) this Congregation wilbee allwayes cleere and free from all such faults!

16. When in the Chapter they are to conferr about the affayres of the Monastery, lett euery one deliuer their opinions with all Religious simplicie and sinceritie, as god shall put in their myndes, and shee that hath once finished her speech, may not speake agame except shee haue new leaue granted her, neither may any presume to argue or dispute aguinst the saying of any other Sisters!

17. The professed of the Quier haue voyces in the Chapter, and their they sitt each one according to the order of their Professions, except the lady Abbesse, the mother Prioresse, the deames, and the Mistris of the Novices, who take their places, both here and in all places where the Conuent meeteth, in that order as here they haue beene named; for the most part the Iuniors or younger professed speake first, that with greater liberty they may vtter their opinions concerning those affayres, that are then in deliberation;

18. In matters of great moment the Abbesse shall forewarne the Chapter of them some two or three dayes before, if the matter will suffer soe long delay; But in those maters where in the Religious may conferr among

among them selues, they may take their light and information onely from the Abbesse, Prioresse, Assistents, or the Officers, if the matters to bee deliberated vppon, appertayne to their Charges and Iurisdictions;

19. What by the Chapter is approued or denyed, the same the Abbesse is to approue or deny, except in some cases hereafter specified;

20. That both the Abbesse, and also the whole Conuent may procede in their Consultations, and determinations with more sweetenesse, light, and assurednesse; it is expedient that they haue some one prudent and vertuous man, but especialy well practised in regular life and discipline, with whom they may conferr and consult in matters of greater difficulty and wight; And this Man must bee such an one; as may bee according to the liking and Iudgment of the Religious, and by their suffrages hee is to bee elected;

21. If it soe happen that the Religious disagree in their opinions about some matter; lett the sayd difficultie bee propounded either in Worde or writing to the chosen person in the presence of the Abbesse, of the Assistents, and of some other two of the Chapter, vnto whom the saye Chapter shall committ this affayre, and all shall bee bound to follow that Order and Resolution, which hee shall

hee shal iudge expediēt, vntill the right Reuerēd lord Bishopp or the Visitor shall other wayes ordayne; But hee shall deliuer in writing to the Conuent his sayd Iudgment, that afterwards to the Bishopp or Visitor it may better appeare howand in what termes the whole busines passed;

22. If the Abbesse would appoynte any thing which the Conuent doth not like of, or would not doe that which the Conuent would haue done, and if shee would proceede in some cases cōtrary to the Iugdment of all her Assistēts, or will not assemble thē to geat her (for some secrett Cause which shee thinketh good not to communicate with them) if the matter bee of great momente shee must cōsult with the afore sayd chosen person, and shee may proceede according to his Counsayle deliuered her in writing;

23. Out of Chapter none may seeke to disproue the saying of any vttered in Chapter, neither may any manifest vnto any that was absēt from the Chapter, that which was sayd or done by her selfe, or any other, which may any wayes touch her or any other whoe soeuer; They are to bee absent from the Chapter, about whom there is any question to bee propounded in Chapter, or any thing to bee handled about them: as all those (if the Chapter thinke it meete) whoe are neere in

bloode

bloode or kindred to them; and the Superiours are to warne and commaunde such persons, as are to bee soe absent, that curiously they doe not enquire what was any way handled concerning them selues;

CHAPTER 11.

Of the sicke and infirme Sisters.

1. When any feeleth her selfe more greiued in her bodely health then accustomed, lett her warne the Superiour and Gouernour of the the Infirmary thereof, and when shee hath fully informed her of her State, with due humilitie and quietnesse of mynde, lett her suffer hir selfe to bee disposed of by them, as they shall thinke goode;

2. Lett none refuse any thing ordayned them by the Phisitions, but hauing made knowne her difficulty to the Abbesse, shee must leaue it to her what shee will determyne of her ease, and soe shee must bee obedient to her, with all patience and shew of religious resignation;

3. See that shee bee not greivous to the Infirmere and others that haue care of her, neither may shee bee over importune in craving of thosethings which by the shee shall vnderstand not to bee expedient for her;

Whyle shee vseth corporall remedyes for the recouery of her health, let her not forgett her spirituall good, which allwayes is to bee more prised; there fore shee must haue regard to arme and shengthen her selfe inwardly with the holy Sacraments of Confession, and of the blessed Eucharist; and if shee perceaue, that the force of her Disease with perill to grow vppon her lett her endeauour to call for the Sacrament of Extreme Vnction, and for the holy Viaticum, according as the Abbesse, and Confessarius shall thnike best for her;

5. Shee must take noe medicine which the Phisition or Superiour shall not approue, nether may any of the Religious Councell her to receaue any medicine, nor may the sicke her selfe aske the Counsayle or advise of any other, without the Superiours knowledge; yea noe Religious may bee soe presumptuous, as to finde fault with the vsage of the sicke person in her hearing.

6. As it is expedient that the sicke vse such dispensations as by the Superiour are granted them whyle they are infirme and weake, yet they must beware that they bee not ouer care full of them selues; yet all may vse a discreete and prudent liberty, vntill they bee sufficiently recouered, and restored to their former strength, and such as

are

ate in their Recouery (if they bee many) muſt ſitt togeather with modeſty at one Table, and in the beginning of their meales ſome ſpirituall thing muſt bee read vnto them;

CHAPTER 12.

Of the diſtribution of their Tyme and howers;

1. TO the end they may proceede in the Seruice of God with greater alacritye, and that their ſpirituall Exerciſes doe not ouerpaſſe their bodely ſtrength and health, it is thought meete and conuenient, that euery one haue granted her ſeuen whole howers to take her reſt, and ſleepe, and that from eight of the Cloke at night, vntill three in the morning *or from ten till fiue* except hereafter it bee thought more fitt ād expedient, that thy riſe to Mattins at midnight;

2. Therefore they ſhall riſe to Mattins at three, *vnleſſe the ſayd ouer night*, and when they haue ended the ſayd Mattins with the laude euery one muſt repayre to their Celles in good and fitt tyme (ād as the Abbeſſe ſhall appoynte) they ſhall beſtow an hower in Meditatiō or mentall prayer, after which hower ended they muſt cōtinue in their Celles vntill

nen in soueraigne silence.

3. At seuen of the Clocke they beginne Prime after wich hower ended ordinaryly they keepe Chapter when it is to bee kept, al thoughe the Abbesse may call a Chapter at any other hower, when needeshall require.

4. After Prime, or the Thirde, a Masse is to bee sayd, at which all are to bee present, excepte some Officer vppon necessitie bee excused.

5. After nyne of the Clocke (when they doe not fast) they must recite their third: after their Third, their Conuentuall Masse is to bee sung, or sayde; after Masse the Sixt is sung or sayd: after that hower is ended they goe to the Refectory; But when they Fast according to their Rule, or according to the Commaundment of the Church the Prime, or the Third being sung, or sayd after seuen of the Clocke a Masse is to bee celebrated, if there bee a Preist to celebrate at that tyme; after ten of the Clocke they must sing or say their Sixt, their Conuentuall Masse and Nynth; In lent after their Sixt, Nynth and Conuentuall Masse, the Cuensong is to bee song or sayd.

6. Lett them soe end their Masse and howers before noone, that when they fast not, they may dine at the halfe hower before a cleuen; but when they fast according to the Rule,

Rule, they may dine at a eleuen; but when it is a faſt of the Church according to the Cuſtome of the Country, they dine at the halfe hower before twelue: but in lent they are to dine at twelue: and Whyle they are at the Table their muſt bee allwayes reading; Therefore at the firſt Table whether it bee at dinner or Supper, the Benediction, and afterwards Grace, muſt bee allwayes ſunge or ſayde; But at the ſecond Table euery Religious ſhall performe this by her ſelfe; But the reading both at the firſt and ſecond Tables muſt bee performed after the ſame manner and altogeather with the ſame obſeruation of ſilence and then they are to reade whom the lady Abbeſſe, or Superior, or ſhee who ſhall haue the Charge ſhall appoynte.

7. After dinner an hower is permitted the for Recreation, and afterwards at Noone or ſomewhat after, they ſing or ſay the Nynth, but ſoe that vppon thoſe dayes in which they faſt not, they may bee all in ſilence about one of the Clocke after Noone, that their for the ſpace of an hower they may recollect themſelues. or occupy themſelues in prayer, or in the reading of ſome ſpirituall bookes: But vppon faſting dayes this hower of ſilence is put of vntill foure of the Clocke.

8. Out of lent they are to ſing or ſay their Euen-

Euenſong at three of the Clocke after noone, which ended they may ſpend the reſt of their tyme till ſupper or Collation according to their diſcretion, or deuotion; yet allwayes in ſilence except the Abbeſſe shall thinke good to vſe their helpes and aſſiſtancein ſome buſineſſe or Office: but if they faſt then they keepe their ſilence from foure till fiue, as hath beene ſayde.

9. When it is not faſting day they goe to Supper halfe an hower before fiue, but when it is a Faſt they receaue their Colation at fiue which being ended an hower of recreation is permitted them; halfe an hower after ſix they muſt all goe to Complyne, fró which time they are to keepe ſoueraigne ſilence vntill the end of Prime the next day; as alſoe the ſayd ſilence is to bee kept, from the firſt Peale to all the howers and Euẽſong vntill they bee ended. except for ſome very great reaſons the contrary bee thought ſome tymes requiſit.

10. They are to haue allowed them a quartir of an hower after Complyne for the examination of their Conſciences, ymmediately after they are to reade or heare the matter of their meditation for the next day. When they haue ended that they muſt forthwith depart to their dormitory and ſo apply the Remnant of their tyme

vn leſſe they ſay matins.

tyme in their neceſſary affayres, as at eight the may bee in bede.

11. Wee haue thus breifly compriſed theſe matters in this place which are more amply and perticulerly ſett downe in their Ceremonies, what tyme ſoeuer shall bee Vacant and free from the deuine Office, from Silence, and from their other affore ſaide Obſeruances, the Religious muſt imploy in ſuch labours and Workes as by the Abbeſſe and Superior shalbee appointed ſoe that they worke noecurious, vayne, and ſeculer things for wordly vſes, as are purſes, Bandes handchercheifes and the like.

12. When they come to the Worke houſe the Mother Prioreſſe, or the more ancient deane in her abſence beginneth the Prayer Actiones noſtras &c. after which followeth ſome short Leſſon or reading in ſome Spirituall booke, from the hearing where of none may bee abſent without leaue This ended euery one is to bee diſmiſſed or licenced to their workes, labours, or Offices as it shalbee appointed them, all they muſt indeauor to accomplish with due ſilence, except per happs neede require that they ſpeake ſome what breifely, and by the way of ſuch matters as appartayne to their Offices and buſineſſes, Finally when they leaue of their worke the prayer *Suſcipe Clementiſſime Deus*, being

ſayd, they are in all peace to depart to their other Obediences.

CHAPTER 13.

Of ſuch prayers as by Obligation are to bee ſayd for the liuing and the dead.

1. ONce euery Month a Maſſe is to bee ſung or ſayd for your Benefactors that are aliue, and ſoe often euery Religious ſhall ſay for them one Roſary, or the third parte of the Pſalter of our bleſſed Lady, contayning fiue Pater noſters and fifety Aues with a Greede.

2. When the Abbeſſe hath rendred her Soule to her Creator, euery Religious in fitt tyme when they ſhall haue opportunitie ſhall ſay fifeteene Roſaryes in manner before ſpecified, and the Conuent ſhall take care to procure that therty Maſſes bee ſayd for her.

3. Thirely in their Church after the whole Office of the dead a ſolemne Maſſe muſt bee ſung for the Abbeſſe deceaſed: like wiſe

se a solemne Masse (without the Office of the dead) is to bee sung on the third, seuenth, and thirtith dayes after her decease, or vppon some other dayes more fitt.

4. Alsoe euery yeare vppon the Friday of the first weeke of Aduent, not hindred with a Feast, other wise vppon some other day in like manner not hindred, they shall sing the Euensong and the Nocturne, with the Laudes, and a solemne Masse for all the Abbesse of ther monastery departed this life.

5. When any professed Religious dyeth, in her Monastery, at the first opportunity the whole Office of the dead, and a solemne Masse is to bee sung, and the like is to bee performed for her vppon the Third, Seuenth, and Thirtith dayes (but without the Office of the dead) or soe many Masses shal bee sung for her vppon some other dayes more fitt for the performance there of, and other seuen Masses are to bee sayd for the some, Moreouer euery one of the Conuent shall say fiue Rosaryes for her, and euery day after Mattines and Euensong for the space of a moneth they shall say de profundis with the Prayer Absolue, both for the Abbesse as alsoe for the Soules of their Sisters deceased.

6. Vppon the Fri day after the first Sunday in Lent, not hindred with a double

Feaſt, otherwiſe vppon another fitt day next following, a ſolemne Maſſe shalbee ſung for them that haue dyed in the Monaſtery as alſoe the Euenſong of the dead with one Nocturne and the Laudes shalbee ſung or ſayd for them, the which may bee performed the day before the afforeſayd ſolemne Maſſe bee celebrated.

7. One ſolemne Maſſe, with the whole Office of the dead, shalbee ſung for thoſe Nouices, who in their Nouiſhipp shall depart out of this life, after they haue receaued the habitt of holy Religion.

6. Such Scollers as haue entred in to the Monaſtery with intention to goe forward in Religion, shall haue granted them after the Euenſong and whole Office of the dead, a ſolemne Maſſe to bee offered and celebrated for them.

9. Once euery yeare in Aduent after the Maſſe celebrated for the Abbeſſes (as hath beene ſayd) another shalbee ſung in due tyme for the Soules departed, of ſuch Religious of other Monaſteryes as are of your Congregation, and liue vnder the ſame Rule and Statutes with you.

10. For the founder departed this life, all thoſe things are to bee performed which are appointed for an Abbeſſe deceaſed, and for a perpetuall memory they shall ſing his

Anniuer-

Anniuersary Office with a solemne Masse and both aliue and dead hee is made pertaker of all the Merritts of the whole Congregation.

11. When the Father or Mother of any professed Religious departeth this life, a Masse must bee sung for euery one of them.

12. For the right Reuerend Bishopp in whose dioceese they reside they shall sing the whole Office of the dead, and vppon the Third, Seuenth, and Thirtith dayes, or some other three more fitt dayes, they shall sing three other Masses, and euery one shall say a Rosary for his Soule: all which must bee performed for their Ghostly Father, who hath much laboured and taken paynes in aduancing the good of the Monastery, and hee may bee made pertaker of the mirritts of the Conuent, if soe to the Conuent it shall seeme expedient. Other Benefactors and frends when they dy, besides this Offices and Masses which the Conuent may grant them in perticuler they shall al soe bee made pertakers of all those Masses which (according to the Missall of Rome) are sayd or sung euery Munday by your Chaplaine.

13. If any thing be thought expedient to bee further granted to any of the aforesayd, lett it bee done vppon deuotion, and according

ding to their deserts, with this prouiso, that noe burthen bee imposed vppon the Conuent for any long space.

14. The Abbesse and Conuent shall found noe Masse for any person in perticuler: yet they may mayntayne a Chaplaine whoe may say Masse for such persons deceased, as appertayne to the Monastery, yet soe, that the Fundation may not bee thought to bee made for any one in perticuler.

15. Let a Register bee made, where in the names of all the Benefactors both liuing and dead who haue notably aduanced the temporall good of the Monastery may bee sett downe, In the same al soe are to bee sett downe all the names of such Religious as in the Monastery departed this life, and in the same also is to bee written if any thing of noate hapned to them, either in their life or at their death that it may serue for an Example to Posteritie, and lett these things bee reade the day before their yeares yndes, or Annyuersaryes, that peculiar care and memory may bee had of them.

16. And for as much as after holy deuoute Prayers, Almes deeds doe much helpe for the extinguishing of the Paynes in Purgatory, it is here ordayned that in that monastery, where in any of the professed

Religious

Religious passeth out of this life, all such meate and drincke as is giuen to the rest of the Religious, bee dayly sett on the Table in the Refectory, in the same place where the fore sayd Religious was wont to sitt, as if shee ware yet liuing; all which or as much as the Lady Abbesse or Superior shall appoynte, afterwards is to bee giuen in Almes to some one poore person or to diuers, for the space of thirty dayes and that for the benefitt of the Soule departed, Neither may any other sitt in that place, but it being left voyde, lett a litle Crosse bee placed on the Table couered with a blacke Cloth, and another blacke Cloath bee made fast to the Wall in the vacant place in Remembrance of the dead Religious Sister, that the rest may bee moued to due Compunction by the memory of death, and bee the more excited to pray with greater feruour for her that is dead, and finally may there by bee stirred vpp to lead their liues more carefully and perfectly for the tyme to come,

Kanll priee. 19516
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THE SECOND PARTE OF THE STATVTES.

OF THE OFFICERS OF the Conuent, and of certayne other perſones belonging to the Monaſtery.

AT GANT.

Printed by Ioos Dooms. 1632.

THE SECOND PART OF STATUTES,

OF THE OFFICERS OF the Customs, and of certain other petitions belonging to the Monarchy.

AT CANTI.

CHAP: THE FIRST.

Of the chousing of the Abbesse.

1. ALL Order of good disciplyne, and almost the whole good and Conseruation of the Monastery dependeth vppon the prudent gouernement of the Abbesse, therefore it appertayneth to euery one, for the good desire they beare to the good aduancemēt of the Conuent, to bee very carefull in this poynte, that they chouse such an one for the Gouernesse of all, whoe is likest to prouide for the peace and tranquillitie of all, and especially for the setting forth of God his honor in all things; Therefore such Religious as are professed for the Quier, (for such onely haue actiue and passiue Voyces in the chusing of the Abbesse, and cheifest Officers) shalbee bound as in a matter of soe great moment and weight, to make election of her whom in their Consciences they thinke most fitt for that Office.

 2. None

2. None may bee choſen for Abbeſſe that is vnder fourty yeares of age, and who hath not liued laudably for eight yeares, after their expreſſe Profeſſion, as the holy Councell of Trent hath decreed; except in Caſe ſuch a one cannot bee found in the Monaſtery, then by grant of the ſame Counſell, another fitt perſon may bee choſen whoe is aboue thirty yeares ould, and that hath beene profeſſed for the ſpace of fiue yeares, and hath all requiſitt Conditions for this dignitie, ſoe that with all the Bishopp doe yeald his conſent there vnto.

3. They shall obſerue that Order in deliuering their Voyces that is ſett downe in that Counſell, which is, that they are to deliuer them at the Grate, and moreouer the Elect muſt haue two parts of three of the Voyces, according to the Bull of Gregory the 13. ſett forth the 7. of Aprill. in the yeare of our Lord 1574.

4. The Abeſſe (beſides thoſe Conditions where of mention is made in the ſecond, and ſixty foure Chapters of the Rule) muſt bee ſuch a one, as of whom their hath beene had noe ſiniſter opinion, either ſince her comming to the Conuent, or before whyle shee liued in the World, that shee bee endewed with the Gifies of body and mind

as

as may beſt retayne Authority, that shee be in eſpeciall manner free from all inordinate Paſſions, and finally that shee bee ſuch a one, that shee may bee Iudged fitt and able to gouerne, and adminiſter well the Temporalities and Spiritualities of her Monaſtery.

5. Albeit it may ſoe fall out that shee which is vnlawfully be gotten, may bee admitted into this Congregation; yet is not expedient to promote any ſuch to the gouernement of the Manaſtery; Wherefore shee shall not haue paſſiue Voyce to this dignitie, except very great Reaſons doe vrge the contrary: and when it shall ſeene requiſite to procede otherwiſe, shee muſt haue for her election, three partes of all the Voyces of the Chooſers, as in like manner that Religious whoe is within three degrees of Conſanguinitie to the next precedent Abbeſſe, muſt haue the ſame number of ſuffrages for her Eliction.

6. Noe perticuler Religious may haue a double Voyce for the Election of the Abbeſſe, or of any other Officer of the Monaſtery, as neither shee that is abſent out of the monaſtery hath any Voyce to chouſe al though the ſayd abſent Religious may haue paſſiue Voyce. But the Religious that

is soe sicke that shee cannot bee presente at the Scrutiny must deliuer vpp her Suffrage and Voyce by those Scrutatrices, that for that tyme shall bee chosen by the Conuent.

7. None of what dignitie, Nobilitie, or degree soeuer besides the Religious of the same Monastery professed for the Quier may haue any Voyce to elect. If therefore any other person either by word or writing shall commend any one to bee elected by the Conuent they must all take good heede that they deliuer not their Voyces in regard of that Commendation: as alsoe shee may not succeede the deceased Abbesse, for whom the saide Abbesse did in her life tyme solicite the Conuent, except shee bee chosen in such sort as before hath beene declared.

8. The Prioresse when the Abbesse is wanting must gouerne the Monastery, vntill an other Abbesse bee elected. Shee shall certify the right Reuerende Lord Bishopp of the death of her Superior, whom shee shall dilligently hasten to the election of her that is to succede, the which ought to bee done with in a Moneth, at the most, if the Bishopp cann bee present or conueniently appoynte an other, whoe in his place may assist

assist as the Election.

9. The Prioresse shall certify the Conuent what answeare shee hath receaued from the right Reuerende the Lord Bishopp, and if shee receaue from him any letters lett her carefully see they bee read to the Conuent, as also all such Statutes cõceruing the Electiõ, neither may any aske any Counsayle of any person for the Election of any but onely of the ghostly Father, to the End shee may bee the better directed in her Conscience yet soe that the Religious consult not one with another about the promoting or putting downe of any, if they shall doe otherwise, they shall not onely euer bee depriued of actiue and passiue Voyce, but shee shall endure all whatsoeuer other Censures the Prioresse and Conuent shall inflict vppon her.

10. It shall not bee lawfull for the Prioresse or any other Religious to speake with Externes except some most important cause perswade the Contrary; and how often soeuer they are then to speake with them two of the Deanes shalbee present who togeather with the Prioresse shall heare, and see whatsoeuer is sayd or done; and what soeuer of speciall moment hapneth after the Abbesses decease, shee shall diligently

declare to the Bishopp or to his Vicegerent.

11. For as much as they incurr priuation of Actiue and passiue Voyce, as alsoe other penalties who haue sollicited to gett the Voyce of another to the promotion of any, soe all shalbee obliged to reueale all such practises vnder the same penaltye; and it shall belong to the Bishopp, to discerne and determyne whar words and procedings are to bee held for direct or indirect solliciting.

12. Althoughe they may haue an Eye to the Nobilitie, and honor of the kindred of any that is to bee elected, yet the Conuent must bee very carefull, that they doe not neglect the spirituall good of their Monastery, whyle they regard the temporall commodity.

13. To the End the election may the better proceede, and that they may procure for them selues God his holy assistance in that which soe much maketh for their common good, after the Funeralls of the deceased Abbesse the Conuent shall apply all their prayers and Exercises for this End.

14. When they are to deliure their suffrages they shall abstayne from mutuall Conuersation for the space of three dayes, neither shall they come to geather but to the celebrating of deuine seruice, to the reading,

and

and to the Refectory; and vppon the very day of the election, after they haue ſong a Maſſe of the holy Ghoſt, they ſhall retyre themſelues to their Cells, vntill they bee called to giue their Voyces.

15. To the end noe Error happen in deliuering their Suffrages, the Prioreſſe ſhall deliuer the names of all the profeſſed in writing that haue any Voyces, either to the Bishopp or to him whoe ſupplyeth his place and in the ſayd writing shee ſhall ſett downe ther age, the yeares and tyme of their profeſſion, togeather with all ſuch Exceptions or Canonicall impediments, as the Statutes haue ſett downe againſt their Election.

16. Two or three mature graue and Religious men are to bee choſen by the Chapter, whoe for the more honor of that Action may bee preſent with the Lord Bishopp at the Election, and the Bishopp or hee, who (at the Bishopps appoyntement) ſhall preſide at the Election hauing obſerued all that is ſett downe in the Statutes, ſhall declare at the Grate the perſon elected; But if in it the firſt two Scrutinyes ſufficient ſuffrages doe not agree, then lett thoſe three which had the moſt ſuffrages in the laſt Scrutiny bee propoſed to the Conuent, and in the third shee that by balloting or by Boules

shall haue ſufficient Voyces, is to bee held for Elect. And if againe in all the ſayd three Scrutinyes they haue equall, or not ſufficient ſuffrages then the more Ancient profeſſed among them is to bee preferred and to bee denounced Abbeſſe.

17. The election ended, and declared by him that preſided, all the Religious are to retyre themſelues into the Chapter: where (after the Elect hath according to the manner accuſed herſelfe in generall of all her defects) shee muſt according and to the tenor and forme of that writing that is ſett downe in the booke of Ceremonyes, promiſe that shee will neuer ſuffer any further libertie to bee brought into the Congregation, then the holy Rule and Statuts doe permitt; but that shee will endeauor together with the grace and aſsiſtance of God that the Congregation bee conſerued in Spirritt, and aduanced in the ſame, and if shee shall eſpy that it fayleth in any thing other wiſe then it ought, that shee will labour (calling thoſe to counſell by whoſe prudence and authority shee may beſt worke reformation) to reduce and reſtore it to the former good eſtate, and to all this shee is to ſigne and ſubſcribe, After this proteſtation made, lett the Rules and Statutes bee

reade

reade which concerne the Abbeſſe, and then by the Prioreſſe, or (if the Prioreſſe be thoſen) by the ancienteſt deane lett her bee placed in her Seate, and aftherwards eath one in perticuler shall doe her that Reuerence, and in ſuch manner as is declared in the booke of Ceremonyes, and from that tyme euer afterwards, shall yeald dutifull Obedience to all hir Commandements; and all the Officers shall in publike reſigne to her their Offices, leauing it to her Freedome, either to confirme them in their Officers, or according to the Statutes by ſuffrages to appoynte new Officers, euen as in our Lord shee shall thinke moſt expedient.

18. The Elect is abſolutely forbid and prohibited to inquire of any whether shee gaue her ſuffrage for her Election, neither may shee either directly or indirectly ſifte what paſſed by her Subiects in the matter of her Election, neither may any tell to any of the Religious, or to the Abbeſſe, or to any other, either directly or indirectly vppon whom shee beſtowed her Voyce; If the Abbeſſe shall offend herein, shee is to vnderſtand that there by shee hath loſt all Iuriſdiction, but if others ſignify ſoe much either to the Abbeſſe or to any others, in ſoe doing they looſe both actiue and paſſiue

Voyce

Voyce for euer;

19. The Elect, before her benediction, for the ſpace of ſome dayes ſhall liue ſeperate from the reſt. that well and dilligently shee may examyne her owne defects and that shee may imploy that tyme in Contemplation of ſpirituall matters, where by being illuminated by thy ſpiritt of Gods light, shee may the better imploy her ſelfe in thoſe things that appertayne to her Office: and principally to obtayne of him the guift of Wiſedome, and humilitie, and a fervent and burning zeale of his deuine honour, and that shee may endeauour to Correct and reforme her owne defects, or any ſuch perticuler abuſes, as shee shall note to haue crept into the Congregation.

20. In fitt tyme (when the Lord Bishopp shalbee at leiſure) lett the accuſtomed Benedictiō bee parformed, either in the Church of her owne Monaſtery, or in ſome other as hee shall appointe: at which ſome foure profeſſed Religious (at the leſt) elected by the Conuent shalbee preſent, and thoſe Expences (by conſent of the Chapter, with regard had of Religious pouerty) are to bee made, as may ſeeme fitt and ſeemely for ſuch an Action.

21. The Abbeſſe of this Congregation muſt bee

bee perpetuall, except through age, notable Infirmity, or (which god forbied) for some greuious Fault, (as here after is sett downe) shee shalbee iudged by the Voyces of two parts of three of the Conuent, togeather with the Verdict of the Ordinary to bee vnfitt for gouernment.

22. It may not bee lawfull for the Abbesse or Elect (that is accused of any fault for which shee may bee brought into danger of deposition (either by her selfe or others, to seeke out who gaue their Voyces against her. If shee shall doe otherwise euen thereby shee shalbee depriued of her dignity, and they whoe either directly or indirectly discouered what others haue done there in conceruing her, shall loose both actiue and passiue Voyce for euer after.

23. If the Abbesse would resigne her Office because shee findeth her selfe much broken in age, and in her strenght, or that shee might the better attend to her owne spirituall good, shee may not obtayne leaue to doe it, except two of three parts of the Conuent, togeather with the consent of the Ordinary do yeald there vnto.

24. If the Abbesse shall obtayne leaue to resigne, shee shall make her sayd Resignation in the presence of the right Reuerend

Lord

Lord Bishopp, or of him whom hee shall
ſubſtitute in his place, And becauſe it is pre-
ſumed, that shee hath done this for the com-
mon good of the Couent, the Abbeſſe that
shall ſuccede, muſt vſe her as a perpetuall
Aſſiſtant about her, and to bee ſubiect to
none but to her ſelfe onely; and in her diet
all ſuch allowance muſt bee giuen to her
as is accuſtomed to the other Abbeſſe, and
the reſt are to vſe the ſayde Reuerences to
her, as they are accuſtomed to their other
Abbeſſes, and when shee dyeth shee is to
enioy all thoſe priuiledges, which they enioy
that dy in their Offices, and shee is to haue
a double Voyce in the Election of her Suc-
ceſſor, (but for her owne Reſignation shee
shall haue noe voyce) as alſoe shee muſt
haue a double Voyce in the election of all
the other Officers, which by the Conuents
Voyces are to bee choſen.

25. If the Abbeſſe eſpy any Error com-
mitted by her predeceſſor, lett her ſoe hand-
le the matter, that shee ſeeke ſtill to con-
ſerue her Reputation, and as often as shee
maketh mention of her deceaſed Predece-
ſor, shee muſt neuer name her but in hono-
rable manner, as shee muſt likewiſe haue
care that all her Subiects doe the ſame.

THE

THE II. CHAPTER.

Of the choſing of the other Officers.

1. NOe Religious may haue paſſiue Voyce for the principall Officers, except shee haue liued laudably foure yeares at the leaſt in Religion, after her Profeſsion; and bee fiue and twentie yeares ould compleate, except vrgent neceſsitie bee to the contrary.

2. The principall Officers, to witt, the Prioreſſe, deanes Miſtreſſe of the Nouices, Aſsiſtants, depoſitary Cellarier, Sacriſtane, Chantreſſe, Portreſſe, Thourier, Infirmare, and Guardrobe, muſt bee choſen by more then halfe the Voyces of the Conuent, their Voyces muſt bee ſett downe in writing, and the ſayd writings muſt bee peruſed by the Abbeſſe, and the Scrutatrices, and they are to bee publickly reade in the hearing of all either by the Abbeſſe or by one of the Scrutatrices, whom shee will appoynte, and the ſayd writings are all to bee burned before they departe out of the Chapter.

3. If any difficulty ariſe about the deliuering of their Suffrages, and that it happen that

that ſufficient Voyces doe not agree, lett that Order bee taken as before was ſett downe in the Election of the Abbeſſe, when the like caſe doth fall out.

4. Shee that ſhall endeauour to procure for her ſelfe, or for any other, by any meanes the Voyce of any for any of the aforeſayd Offices, ſhee ſhalbee depriued of all actiue and paſſiue Voyce whyle she liueth; which punishment shee shall alſoe incurr, that by vn iuſt perſwaſions and complayntes ſhall labour to hinder any from any Office, except shee make her complaynts onely to the Lady Abbeſſe.

5. Theſe before named Officers are to bee choſen euery third yeare, and therefore at a tyme for this appoynted (to witt vppon the firſt Munday in Lent not hindred by a Feaſt, otherwiſe vppon the next day following) they ſhall all reſigne their Offices in the Chapter houſe, and the Conuent muſt chouſe others in their places; Yet it is permitted that the Conuent may onely once confirme the ſelfe ſame perſon in her Office; where in notwithſtanding shee ſhall not continue more then for ſix yeares; But if any one is able to fullfill and well accomplish diuers Offices, it is left to the Conuents libertie to conſtitute fewer.

6. The

6. The terme of three yeares is limited onely for those Officers as haue well performed their Offices: but if any bee found not sufficiently fitt for her Office, shee may bee discharged of her Office, whensoeuer the Abbesse and Conuent thinke fitt.

7. The Sister of the Lady Abbesse may not bee chosen for Prioresse, deane, Assistant, depositary, Cellarier, Thourier, or Portresse, whyle the Abbesse liueth, except shee hath the third parte, of foure of the Voyces of the Conuent.

8. The Inferiot Officers, whoe are not sett downe among the aforenamed principall Officers, and are appoynted for diuers Functions in the Conuent, may bee chosen for such offices by the Abbesse her selfe alone, and whereas they may bee often changed, as the rest, yet if any haue laudably behaued her selfe in her charge shee may the longer bee contynued in the same, yet soe, that this bee done rather vppon necessitie, then vppon any priuate and perticuler affection.

9. None may confer with any about the setting vpp or taking away of any Office, but with the Abbesse alone, or in publike Chapter, and if she proceede otherwise, she is to bee punished at the discretion of the

Abbesse and Conuent.

10. All the Officers are to reade or heare once euery moneth all such Rules, directions, and Statutes as appertayne to their Offices: and the Inferior Officers are to haue them written, and sett vpp in some place in their Offices.

THE III. CHAPTER.

Of the Office of the Abbesse.

1. FOr asmuch as the Abbesse is by almightie God appoynted Gouernesse ouer the Spowses of Iesus-Christ, to direct and confirme them in the way of his holy Commandements and of a perfect Religious life, there fore shee ought to excell all her Subiects in Charity, Fayth, Chastitie, Wisedome, and notable humilitie, that shee may aduance and sett them fowards to the due keeping and obseruance of their holy Rule and Constitutions and to the topp of all perfection noe lesse by her exemplar life, and behauiour then by the authoritie and dignitie of her Office. Where vppon shee must carry to all a motherly harte and affection, and endeauour to make them familier and tyed in loue

in loue towards her ſelfe, that with greater confidence they may make their recourſe vnto her, as to their common mother and there by ſubmitt themſelues to all her Commandements, and Councells, and performe all things, drawne rather by the ſpiritt of loue, then by feare and force of Conſtraynt;

2. Euery day in perticuler manner shee ought to imploy ſome tyme where in shee may ſeriouſly conſider with her ſelfe, by what manner and meanes, shee may beſt ſett forward the Common good and profitt of her charge. And shee ought to endeauour (ſoe farr forth as the ſundry burthens and buſineſſes of the Monaſtery will permitt) to aſſiſt with the reſt and bee preſent in the Quier and other places of Obſeruances, and to obſerue all thoſe things vnto which the reſt are tyed.

3. Shee muſt haue a care of the ſpirituall and Corporall good of all, yea and of euery one in perticuler, shee muſt ſuffer each of them to haue a free acceſſe vnto her, ſoe often as they shall requeſtit, or as shee shall know or vnderſtand it wilbee profitable vnto them, and that shee her ſelfe may well and fitly attend thereunto.

4. Shee muſt receaue and intertayne ſuch as come vnto her with all ſuauity and gentleneſſe; and shee muſt bee very wary that by her Countenance, or vehemency of her words, or manner of carriage and proceeding shee doe not at any tyme feare them, that with freedome and Confidence they may not diſcouer and lay open their difficulties vnto her.

5. Lett her shew a motherly affection to ſuch as any way offend, that they may ſee that their fault and not their perſon is diſpleaſing to her, and lett her carry her ſelfe, that shee may not bee noted to bee diſguſted with any one; finally in giuing of Penances lett her haue an Eye to the ſpirituall good of euery one, and that noe wayes shee ſeeke their trouble and vexation, allwayes diligently and maturely thinking and caſting with her ſelfe, by what meanes the pennances which shee enioyneth, may helpe to aduance their ſpirituall good.

6. In ſuch things as touch the Common diſciplyne, lett her shew her ſelfe firme and conſtante, and lett her not at any tyme ſuffer any thing to bee violated and infringed; where vnto they are bound by Rule or Statute. But in thoſe things that are held leſſe eſſentiall lett her not bee to hard, and difficill

ſcill in diſpenſing, and ſoe lett her mayntayne good Order and diſciplyne, that shee may diſcretely and prudently apply her penſations to the ſolace of her Subiects, and the more ſeruice of almighty God.

7. Lett her often enquire of the Prioreſſe and conferr with her, concerning the State of the Conuent, and alſoe of the Miſtreſſe of the Nouices, depoſitayre, and Cellarier, concerning all ſuch matters as belong to their Charge; and shee muſt commaunde them to repayre to her ſo often as neede shall require.

8. Shee shall once euery moneth, either by her ſelfe or by ſome others, whom shee shall appoynte, (eſpecially the deanes) viſit all the Offices of the Monaſtery, but eſpecially of the depoſitayre, Cellarier, Sacriſtane, Guarderoabe and Infirmair; alſoe once euery moneth shee shall viſitt by her ſelfe, or by her ſayd aſſignes the Cells of all the Religions, and the peculiar offices of all vnder Officers, that shee may ſee how in all things Religious decency, cleanlyneſſe, and order bee kept, and obſerued;

9. Lett her bee vigilant that all the Officers execute and performe their Offices with great ſweetneſſe, Charity and humility, and lett ſuch bee put from their Offi-

ces that behaue them ſelues trouble ſomely therein; and are found harsh and greuious to other; yet lett her not giue eaſy eare to Inferiours againſt their Superiours, and what shee heareth lett her maturely and dilligently wayghe and examyne, and without very reaſonnable cauſe Inferiours are not to haue acceſſe vnto her, for thoſe matters, which the ſubordinate Officers can ſufficiently per forme by them ſelues, and would doe ſoe if the ſayd Inferiours would come vnto them.

10. Althoughe shee ought much to confide vppon her Officers, yett lett her beware that nothing bee permitted to their inordinate Paſſions, and if at any tyme any Contention or diſpute should happen among them, whereby auerſion of mynds and indignation may bee feared, lett her carefully ſeeke to hinder this Inconuenience, by making peace among them, and by procureing that they allwayes shew ſuch ſignes of humilitie, and Charitie each to other, as may nourish and increaſe religious affection, and loue among them.

11. Shee muſt haue a ſpeciall careof ſuch as are ſicke and infirme, and thoſe shee muſt often viſitt, and endeauour to confort, and in all things (as much as lyeth in her power) lett

lett her haue care of peruerty, but yett ſoe that Religious decency bee ſtill mayntained.

12. Lett her frequent the common Refectory with the reſt, ſoe often as by her health, or her other great affayres shee may, and at Table lett her haue ſome meate aboue, and different from the reſt, whereof shee may imparte to thoſe whom shee shall thinke to bee moſt infirme and weake, and when shee is abſent from the Refectory, lett her by turnes inuite ſuch Religious, as by this way shee shall thinke their weakeneſſe and infirmitie may bee holpen or conforted.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

Of the Office of the Prioreſſe.

1. THE Prioreſſe is choſen to eaſe the Abbeſſe of a great parte of her burthen, shee, in her ſpeach eſpecially, and in her conuerſation, ought to ſtudy how to edify euery one, whoe as shee is a guide to others, ſoe much shee bee a Rule of all good Vertuous life and behauiour, not making any shew of affected Superioritie or permitting the ſame to any other, that the Inferiours being conioyned with Elders and Su-

periours may ſerue each other in ſincere humilitie; and therefore albeit shee bee the mother of the reſt, yet according to her Office is shee to labour to ſerue the reſt;

2. When the Abbeſſe by reaſon of her other hindrances cannot execute thoſe things that appertayne to her Office, then it belongeth to the Prioreſſe, to doe all thoſe things which the Abbeſſe her ſelfe should haue done, if shee had bee ne preſent, as to giue the Benedictions in the Quiar, to grant leaue to ſpeake with Externes, to receaue and giue preſents, and ſuch like; where of afterwards shee is to certify the Abbeſſe in fitt tyme, yea commonly shee may doe all thoſe things, which in theſe Statutes are ſaide, and ſett downe, that by the Superiour they may bee done, eſpecially then when they cannot haue acceſſe to the Abbeſſe her ſelfe.

3. In the Abſence of the Abbeſſe shee is to commaund according as matters occurr in the Quiar, Chapter houſe, Refectory, dorture, and Worke houſe, yea and in all other places, where the Conuent is in any tyme aſſembled; In theſe places shee is allwayes to bee preſent with the Conuent, or if shee cannot bee preſent, shee shall haue care that ſome one of the deames may ſupply her place

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4. In her Wordes and externall behauiour lett her demeane her ſelfe with all ſweeteneſſe, and lett her take diligent care that in the Chapter houſe (where in the abſence of the Abbeſſe shee is to reſide as hath beene ſayd) nothing bee done either by her ſelfe or others, that may giue iuſt occaſion of offence, but lett her endeauour to induce her Siſters with all ſuauitie, and externall shew of loue to the accomplishing of thoſe things which are expedient, and lett her offer her ſelfe ready to yeald them all comfort and ſatisfaction, making herſelfe familiar vnto them yet retayning her due grauitie, that by thoſe meanes all may reuerence her and with their dutifull cariage acknowledge her for their Superiour.

5. Once euery moneth shee shall goe to the Abbeſſe to acquainte her with thoſe things, which shalbee thought requiſitt shee should vnderſtand.

6. Lett her not thruſt her ſelfe in to meddle whith thoſe Offices, whoſe care and Charge, are by the Abbeſſe and Conuent committed to others, neither lett her offer to diſpoſe of the Conuerſe Siſters.

7. She muſt not ſuffer ſuch as haue Offices to diſpoſe of themſelues without her knowledge, yet may shee not hinder them in

their Functions, and Offices; that soe all matters may bee performed in the best Order, and without Confusion.

8. Shee must not permitt that any thing bee infringed or innouated, and when shee perceaueth or feareth any great inconuenience to ensue, lett her acquaint the Abbesse therewith, that according to her appoyntement some remedy may bee prouided for the same.

9. Although shee may reprehend and correct her Subiects for lesser faults, as the Mistresse of the Nouices may the Nouices and Schollers, and the Cellarier the Conuerse Sisters, yet if any faults bee doubtfull or more greiueous then ordinary, or of that Consideration that they may seene worthy of more seuere Chastisement. then shee (as alsoe those two others) shall make them knowne to the Abbesse, that it may bee prouided for according to her Iudgement, and by her authoritie.

10. Lett her dilligently put in Execution what soeuer is appoynted and ordayned by the Abbesse, and in her proceedings and Actions lett her wholly submitt her Iudgment and opinion to hers, persuading all others to doe the same, not contradicting or improuing her Ordinances; if shee do

other wise, besides due Correction (vnto which shee is subiect) shee must vnderstand that shee may bee deposed from her Office as vnworthy thereof.

11. Lett her not permitt any to bee in the Cloyster, or Garden without leaue; nor in the Garden without a Companion; in tyme of Recreation lett her haue care that all meete togeather, that shee may see what soeuer passeth; finally at night when they goe to bedd, either by her selfe or by some other, shee is to visitt all their Cells.

12. Shee shalbee exempt from seruing in the kitchin, and Refectory, except the Abbesse for the increase of her humilitie, shall otherwise ordayne or permitt.

THE V. CHAPTER.

Of the Deanes.

1. THE Deanes haue noe other Office in the Monastery, then prudently to obserue, if there happen any thing in the behauiour, or procedings of the professed Religious, that may neede correction or amendement, yet may they reprehend none, but that which belongeth to their Office, is this, to helpe all by their Counsayle, and

and their mature Iudgment if ſoe bee that they may thinke they bee able to helpe them with their frendly admonition; but if by that way they finde that they doe them litle or noe good, then lett them make it knowne to the Abbeſſe, or Prioreſſe, or Cellarier that they may apply more forcible and neceſſary Remedyes to the ſpirituall diſeaſe.

2. Alſoe of theſe deanes the Aſſiſtentes are choſen, and if all the deanes cannot bee Aſſiſtentes (becauſe the number of the deanes may bee greater then the number of the Aſſiſtents, which may bee but foure) then they that are the more ancient profeſſed, muſt bee preferred before the reſt. If the deanes are fewer then the Aſſiſtants, then thoſe Religious who haue noe other Office in the Monaſtery may bee elected to make vpp the number of the Aſſiſtants.

The lady Abbeſſe is to appoynte ten Religious, or thereabouts to the care of theſe deanes: ſoe that all the profeſſed (onely the lady Abbeſſe and Prioreſſe excepted) muſt bee vnder their charge; euery one of the profeſſed vnto theſe deanes (as all the Religious to the lady Abbeſſe, and Prioreſſe: and the Conuerſe Siſters to the Cellarier; and the Nouices to their Miſtreſſe) muſt doe that Reuerence

rence and shew that respect, which the holy Rule in the seuentie one Chapter commandeth to bee done to their Ancients, and in that case, these onely are to bee esteemed their Ancients.

4. The deanes in the absence of the Lady Abbesse and Prioresse, are to preside in all places of obseruances, and to beare the place of their Superiour, which euery one of them are to performe, according to the antiquitie of her profession; as alsoe in the absence of the deanes the more ancient professed must beare the same Office, except the Abbesse or Prioresse shall appoynte otherwise.

THE VI. CHAPTER.

Of the Mistresse of the Nouices.

1. ALL singuler shew of Vertue, together with a great Zeale, and desire of perfection must appeare, and brightly shyne, in the life and behauiour of the Mistresse of the Nouices, that by her good Example shee may the better excite and stirr vpp those, that are vnder her charge, vnto all those things which their state of life requireth of them; In her cariage lett her all-

allwayes giue shew of sweeteneſſe, and loue and in her words, lett her haue a speciall care to auoyde all bitter contumelious, and disgracefull language, and lett her accommodate her commandements to tymes, persons, and places, well considering with her selfe what euery one is able to doe, and not onely what they ought, or should doe, seing they come to Religiõ, that desire to bee there in perfected, and are not as yet perfect.

2. As euery one commeth to the Monastery, let her soe dispose of her as the Abbesse shall appoynte, and shee shall haue care that such as haue entred doe examyne and discusse their life past very dilligently and soe make their generall Confession, as soone as they can possibly.

3. Whatsoeuer they that come bring with them, lett her receaue it of them, to bee deliuered to the depositary, and whatsoeuer shee receaueth or deliuereth, lett her sett downe in writing, which writing euery one that entreth shall subscribe with their owne hand, of all which things they must dispose a litle before they make their profession.

4. She must haue care that the Nouices and Schollers haue a good methode in meditating deliuered vnto them, and shee must

see

see they bee taught how they may vse vocall prayer fruytefully, shee is to teath them the Catechisme and Christian doctrine, and the manner how to examyne their Consciences and the way how to roote out all Vices and to ouercome all euill habittes and Customes, and finally to mortify their Passions that togeather with the contempt of themselues, they may increase in the loue of God.

5. After they are entred, shee shall declare vnto them, what they are to vndergoe, and what the Congregation expecteth at their hands, shee shall often reade vnto them those Rules and Statutes which appertayne to them and belong to common disciplyne; then shall they deliberate with themselues (weying duly the forces of their bodyes and myndes) what is most expedient for them, and if they continue in their former purpose, then they are by holy meditations to prepare and arme themselues for those things, which they are to take vppon them, in the holy State of Religion.

6. Moreouer the Mistrisse of the Nouices must teach those that are vnder her gouernment a Religious manner of carriage touching their standing, going, looking, speaking, eating, and all other such Actions; that they shew therein a Religious decency

and

and comelyneſſe; to witt, that in their gate they bee not two haſty, except vrgent neceſſity force them that in talking they vſe noe geſtures with their hands, eſpecially whyle they ſpeake to their Superiors, and to Externes, but either they are to hould them vnder their Scapulare, or within the Sleeues of their great habbitt, that they altogeather fly and auoyde all affected ſpeath, and whatſoeuer may ſauour of ſecularitie, or Courtly Vanitie and Curioſitie, which alſoe in their outward behauiour they muſt dilligently eſchew. that they caſt or faſten not their eyes vppon the Countenances of their Superiours, or of Externes, neither houlding them to much vpward, or downeward, that they ſpeake not to lowde, or burſt out into to much intemperate laughter, eſpecially when at the Grates they ſpeake with Externes, the which liberty they muſt vnderſtand is ſeldome to bee granted or permitted them, that they eate, not two faſt, to ſlowly, or to greedily, or that they looke not about them whyle they eate, that whyl they drinke they hould their cupp with both their hands, that they ſeeke to preuent euery one in doing them honour, and Reuerence that they carry themſelues with grauitie, and ſtaydneſſe, that they haue

a care

care to keepe cleanelyneſſe in their Cells and Garments; and that in their Countenances they shew myrth and Alacritie, that whyle they turne, they turne their body as well as their heade; and finally that they carry themselues gratefully and louingly to all; and if their bee any thing vnhanſome in their natures, Cuſtomes, or Education, lett the Miſtriſſe endeauour to reforme it, and bring them to a better fashion, and lett her haue a care to inſtruct them exactly in the holy Ceremonyes of the deuyne seruice, and in all the Obſeruances of their Religious State.

7. If shee ſee any to bee Drawne to doe their duty vppon feare, shee is to vnderſtand that ſuch are not very fitt for Religion, although a moderate feare (eſpecially of God) doth not a little healpe and conduce thereunto.

8. Shee muſt labour to encourage ſuch as are deiected, and puſillanimous; yet if shee ſee any to bee of ſufficient Spiritt and Courage, shee muſt not for all that vrge them to much; lett her bee wary and Circumſpect in all her proceedings towars them, and lett hen perſwade them to diſcouer their difficulties to their Ghoſtly Father, that they may the better bee grounded in their Vocation,

tion, and consequently bee the more securely guyded and Directed in the Scope and end which they ought to ayme att.

9. The Nouices and Schollers must bee tryed in base and humble Exercises, soe often as may bee thought expedient, yet they shall not bee sent to the places appertayning to the charge of other Officers, except the sayd Officers consent thereunto; and lett the sayd Schollers and Nouices bee warned, that the Conuent ought and will seeke to bee informed of their humilitie, Obedience, and desire of the Contempt of themselues.

10. Lett her not perswade or oblige any of them to any kinde of austeritie, but by the Counsel of the Abbesse.

11. She must beware that they bee not ouerthrowne and carryed away with their first feruour, whyle therein they passe the limitts of discretion, and therefore shee shall admonish the Ghostly Father hereof, if their happen any iust cause therein.

12. To the end all may bee the better informed of the natures and dispositions of the Scholers and Nouices, and that they that enter for such may better knowe the vnitie Charitie, modesty, and Religious manner of life which the Religious embrace and leade, the Mistresse (by Commaundement from

the lady Abbesse) shall make choyce of such to conuerse and conferr with her Nouices and Schollers, whoe either by their behauiour, experience, or good example, are best able to edify instructe and helpe them.

13. The Mistris is to bee subiect in all thinges for domesticall disciplyne to the Prioresse, soe farr forth as shee bee not hindred from the Execution and accomplishing of her Office, where by shee is obliged to teach her Scollers, and Nouices, to sing, reade, pronounce a right, and the like; Soe alsoe the Nouices and Schollers in the Quier, Chapter house, Refectory, and in all such places, where the whole Conuent must bee subiect to the sayd Prioresse, wherefore the Mistresse may not commaunde them there in any matter, that there by shee may yeald the more Reuerence and respect to the Superiour, and if any difficulty or inconuenience happen here by or that the Mistrisse bee hindred from the due Execution of her Office, lett her seeke to the Lady Abbesse, for the Remedy there of.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

Of the Assistans.

1. LET such Assistants bee choſen, as vppon whoſe prudence, and Counſayle the Abbeſſe may very well rely, in ſuch difficulties as may occurr: whoe alſoe may well Guyde and direct ſuch Religious as come vnto them at any tyme for comfort, or would informe them of matters occurring according to the Statures. Therefore they muſt bee very diſcreete and circumſpect, noe ways headdy, free from all inordinate Paſſions, Zealous of the common good of the Conuent, which they ought to ſett forward according to their beſt skill, and they ought to bee very care full mayntayners of what ſoeuer maketh for the peace and good diſciplyne thereof.

2. For aſmuch as the Prioreſſe is wont to bee admitted to the Conſultations, foure Aſſiſtants wilbee ſufficient, and they are not to exceede the number of foure, and the younger profeſſed among them, muſt firſt in Order deliuer her opinion, before the Abbeſſe declare her mynde, or what shee would haue concluded; lett them all well and maturely ponder the matter propoun-

ded

ded, and if ſoe bee that the matter may ſuffer delay, and bee of great Conſequence, lett them haue longer tyme to diſcuſſe and conſider it with themſelues, that thereby it may bee the better determyned.

3. Once euery weeke or at leaſt twiſe euery Moneth, they muſt bee called to Conſultation at that houre which the Abbeſſe ſhall appoynte, where shee her ſelfe muſt alſoe preſide, and bee preſent; and one of theſe Conſulters and Aſſiſtants muſt euery weeke haue acceſſe to the Abbeſſe, to know of her when the Aſſiſtants are to bee called to Conſultation. Before the Conſultation begin, *Veni Creator Spiritus &c.* with the prayer. *Deus qui corda fidelium &c.* is to bee ſayd, and the Conſultation being ended; *Suſcipe clementiſsime Deus &c.*

4. The things that are handled in Conſultation moſt commonly are theſe, The Cauſes and Remedyes of diſciplyne broken or neglected; the defects of Officers in their Offices; the trouble or diſguſt of any one conceaued againſt any Officer; want of health in any through indiſcretion; diſſentions, ſecretts meetings, and whiſperings; what manner is to bee obſerued in enioyning of Penances; the Receauing or deliuering of Meſſages or Writings to Externes; the depoſing

sing of Officers; or appointment of new Officers; the Measure of their diett, to greather with the defect or excesse committed in the same; what persons are to bee propounded to the Conuent, and such like.

5. Lett them permitt nothing that may weaken disciplyne, and if they consult about the enioyning of any Pennance, after the thing hath beene maturely determyned, lett them not afterwards interpose themselues for any moderation. But if vppon better Information they finde the Case, to stand other wise then when they consulted about it, and that thereby they feare any hurt or inconuenience may ensue, they must make it knowne to the Abbesse, and soe committ it wholy to her discretion.

6. Of those things that are propounded vnto them they may not debate among themselues out of the place of Consultion, and then noe otherwise then in the presence of the Abbesse; and soe in like manner of those things about which they haue had Consultation. If they shall offend in the contrary, they must endure the same penance, that the other professed should incurr, if they offended in the like Case, much lesse may they communicate vnto others, either within, or without the Conuent, what hath passed

in

in Consultation, or which may any wise touch any person of the Conuent; and if any should vnderstand that Consultation hath beene had about her selfe, yet none shall tell her what resolution hath beene taken about her, but they shall remitt it to the Relation of the Abbesse her selfe, except the Abbesse doth otherwise ordayne.

7. In their Iudgments lett them conforme themselues to the Commaundement of the Abbesse neither may they contend among themselues, or stand to stubbornely in their owne opinions, they must answeare each other with meakenesse, and propose their reasons with all humilitie, yet alsoe with Religious freedome and liberty. Where vppon the lady Abbesse must bee willing to heare their aduises, and must permitt them to haue their necessary liberty in speaking their myndes; yea moreouer shee must inuite and encourage them, that herein they carefully doe their Office, and duty, and if any thing chance to bee spoken by any of them, that may bee distastfull to her, lett her rather winke thereat, then that the Assistants bee made afrayde to deliuer with fredome their opinions, as they are obliged to doe in matters apperteyning to the common good: neither

ought the Abbesse to departe from that they all Counsayle her, but vppon sufficient ground and reason.

8. If nothing occurr whereof they should consult yet the Abbesse ought to call them togeather to see if her Consulters haue any thing to propound vnto her, and if nothing of worth doe occurr they may bee dismissed.

9. When the Religious will declare to the Assistants their mynds concerning those things which they are not willing to declare to the Abbesse her selfe, whereby shee may bee the better informed, let the Assistants, (naming none) performe this with all charitie, and sincerities, and bring them an answeare and resolution as the Case requireth.

10. Euery one must know that they may not deale about any matter with the Assistants, but vppon this Condition, that what they declare vnto them, should bee made knowne vnto the Abbesse, neither may they giue eare to any thing vnder Condition that it bee kept secrett and vnknowne to the Abbesse.

11. After the Assistants leaue their Offices, yet they may not discouer to others in any sort those things that haue beene done

or

or vttered in their Consultations, except onely such matters as by the Abbesse were made common before and imparted to others, and if they shalbee found faulty herein, there by they shalbee disinabled to haue this Office againe for euer after; and to the end the assistants may bee more free in deliuering their opinions, by the Statutes it is for bidden, that the Abbesse doe manifest vnto others, what was sayd or counsayled her by any of the assistants, but onely (as the Case may require) shee may tell the Conuent what was counsayled her, yet soe that shee discouer not vnto them, the name of her that gaue her Counsayle or aduise there in.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

Of the despositayre.

1. THE Office of the depositayre is to keepe all such things as belong to the necessary prouision of the monastery, as Woolen, linnen, money, and the like: and shee is to render an exact accompt of all Receipts and expenses to the Abbesse, whom shee is to certify of all such things of moment which shee receaueth, or spendeth, and

and there in shee is to follow her order and and appoyntment.

2. Shee must haue a Cheſt with two lockes, one of the keyes the Abbeſſe muſt keepe, and shee the other, soe that it may not bee opened without them both. In this Cheſt all the money of the houſe must bee kept, and from thence it muſt bee taken as neede requireth, except the Abbeſſe will keepe by her some ſmale somme, for ſuch vſes as some tymes may occurr.

3. Shee muſt haue the keeping of the great Seale of the Conuent, and therewith shee may Seale nothing without the Conſent of the Conuent, shee alſoe muſt keepe all Originalls and other writings, and Euidences in a Coffer with a double locke, where of the Abbeſſe muſt haue one key and shee another.

4. Once euery yeare the depoſitor togeather with the Guardroabe muſt ſee what euery one hath, and what they want, they muſt ſett all downe in writing, that afterwards they may conſult with the Abbeſſe, how they may prouide for the neceisitie of eath one, and lett them labour to carry an euen hand to all; And to the end all Confuſion may bee auoyded, a certayne howr muſt bee appoynted, at which tyme

euery

ery day all the Officers and the Religious
uſt repayre to the depoſitory for their Ne-
eſſities.

5. When shee deliuereth by appoyntment
of the Abbeſſe any thing to the Cellarier,
Guardroabe, or Cater, lett her demaund a
writing of the perſon that receaueth it, whe-
re in the Receipt is contayned, and lett her
shew her ſelfe prompt and eaſy to execute
thoſe things, vnto which shee is bound by her
Office, and in noe wiſe muſt shee shew her
ſelfe wrangling or contentious; yet if in her
opinion, shee thinketh that any thing may
bee better done, or that shee eſpyeth, that
any thing is more ſpent then ought to bee,
lett her make Relatiõ there of to the Abbeſſe.

6. Lett her take care that all Prouiſions
bee made in their due tymes; for which cauſe
shee muſt ſometymes conferr with the Ab-
beſſe, and Procurator of the Monaſtery, as
alſoe with the Cellarier, conceruing thoſe
things which are vnder her charge, and
which shee is to vſe.

7. Shee muſt gather togeather all ould
things of the Monaſtery, as the ould lockes
ould Iron and ſoch like, alſoe shee muſt
keepe an accompt of all the Reuenewes,
and ſommes of all the perticuler debts, and
of ſuch things as are owing to any; or by

any

any to the Monaſtery, and what tyme the ſayd payments are to bee made.

8. Once euery yeare shee shall render an exact accompt of all her Receips and Expenſes, where of shee is to deliuer a Copy to the Abbeſſe, whoe shall alſoe write it downe in her booke, and shee muſt ſeeke to haue the Abbeſſe ſubſigne to her yeare ly Reckonings, whereby it may appeare that shee hath approued all, and that all things haue paſſed according to her Order and well liking.

THE IX. CHAPTER.

Of the Cellarier.

1. THE Cellarier muſt often conferr with the Abbeſſe about thoſe things which appertayne to her Office, and shee muſt performe that both for quantitie and qualitie of the meate, which shee shall appoynte; shee muſt ſee that all things bee well keept in the Spence and Buttery, that nothing bee negligently ſpent or waſted in meate drinke or any other thing committed to her charge, and with a ſpeciall care shee muſt endeauour that what ſoeuer belongeth to her Office, bee kept cleane

and

nd hand ſome.

2. In the manner of dreſſing and ſeaſo-
ning her meate ; shee muſt looke to that
which is moſt whole ſome, and lett her
voyde all Curioſitie and exceſſe in all things
ill beeſeeming a Religious eſtate; yea if any
thing bee ſuperfluons lett her keepe it care
fully, to bee ſpent, and vſed in due tyme
and Seaſon.

3. Lett her foreſee what is to bee pro-
uided for the day following, and lett her
certify the Cater thereof, and that by wri-
ting. ſoe likewiſe lett her inquire in good
tyme of the Cooke, what shee wanteth,
that in due tyme Prouiſion may bee made
thereof; and if the depoſitair shallbee wan-
ting to her in any thing, shee shall onely
ſignify it to the Abbeſſe.

4. If at any tyme any of the Profeſſed of
the Quier bee ſent vnto her for any thing,
shee is to deliuer vnto them that which they
haue neede of with all due Charitie and
ſweeteneſſe as her abilitie will permitt
her.

5. Shee muſt ſoe diſpoſe all her buſi-
neſſes that shee may bee ſtill preſent at the
deuine Office, ſoe farr forth as shee can
poſſible.

6. The Conuerſe Sisters both Schollers,
Noui-

Nouices as also the professed, and all th
Seruantes of the house are vnder her cha
ge; and shee must bee very watchfull t
keepe them all in peace and Concord, dire
cting them with all meakenesse and gentle
nesse; taking care that they bee not two
much ouer charged with their labour, an
that nothing bee wanting to their spiritual
proffitt and good; but especially of her Con
uerse Sisters.

7. Shee must instruct her Conuerse Sister
in the Catechisme, and Christian doctrine,
and how to pray and make their Confession,
and to goe to the sacreed Communion with
fruyte and proffitt.

8. Lett her see that such Conuerse Sisters
as are appaynted for sundry Offices haue
their directions written in their seuerall Of-
fices; which shee must take care that once
euery Moneth they bee read vnto them,
shee must also haue an Inuentory of all
such things, as euery one vnder her charge
doth vse, and shee must often visitt them
all, that shee may see that nothing bee bro-
ken or nede reparation.

9. Lett her not behaue her selfe contem-
tionsly or distastfully to others, but rather
endeauour to mayntayne both her selfe and
all her charge in inward peace, and let

her

her seeke by her Religious outward temperate gouernment, moderation, and manner of speach to giue edification to others, by the example of her vertuous and true religious life.

THE X. CHAPTER.

Of the Portresse.

IT is the Office of the Portresse to keepe the key of the Gate oft the Monastery, the locke where of must haue two keyes, soe that it may not bee opened without them both. One of these keyes must bee kept by the Abbesse, and when soeuer any person is to enter into the monastery, or any thing is to bee brought in, some one Religious is to bee sent by the Abbesse whoe may bring with her, her key, and there with open and shutt the sayd Gate, and soe carry it backe to the Abbesse againe.

If any are to enter into the Monastery from abroade, the Portresse togeather with her Companion whom the Abbesse or the Superiour shall appoynte (for fewer then two shall neuer accompany them) must bring them to the place whether they are

to

to goe, and none may speake vnto those persons but in a word or two, and as it weare, Obiter, or by the way, neither may the Portresse permitt euery one to open the Gate, or deliuer her key to any, but to her whom the Superiour shall appoynte.

3. If there shalbee more Gates to the Monastery then one, euery one of them must allwayes haue two keyes, where of the Abbesse must haue one, and the Portresse another; and the Portresse must bee very carefull to see they bee allwayes well shutt; and that whosoeuer are lett into the Monastery, doe allwayes enter and departe at full day light, except some most vrgent Causes of necessitie doe exact the contrary, and after Complyne shee is to giue vpp her keyes to the Custody and keeping of the Lady Abbesse.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

Of the Thourier, or the Prefect of the Speaking place.

1. THIS Officer must haue a Cell neere vnto the speaking place, that

that shee may bee the readyer to answeare such as come, and to deliuer such messages as are requisite.

2. Shee must demaunde the names of such persons as come to the speaking place (if shee know them not) and shee must endeauour to informe the Lady Abbesse, or Prioresse of the qualitie of such persons, as require to speake with any one.

3. Shee shall call noe Religious to speake with Externes at the Grate without the due lycence of the Prioresse at the least, and what soeuer shee receaueth of Externes, shee must deliuer it to the Abbesse or to the Prioresse soe soone as wellshee may.

4. When the Religious are called to speake with Externes shee must notify vnto them the quality of the persons, that if they bee persons of qualitie they may goe vnto them in their great habitt, and when shee calleth any to the Parloy or speaking place, lett her signify vnto her what Companion shee is to haue, according as the Abbesse or Prioresse shall appointe; and if the Conuersation seeme to bee vn profitable or inconuenient lett either her Companion or the Prefect of the place prudently and discreetely call her thence.

5. If any Externe bee denyed to speake

with any, lett her in good Religious manner ſeeke to giue the perſon due ſatisfaction, by her yealding thoſe reaſons that are for that purpoſe, and in her ſpeeches, or anſweares, lett her haue care of edification, and religious Ciuilitie, and being by the Bell called to the Parloyre, lett her make haſt to goe thither, and make anſweare to the perſon that called, and ſee that there shee vſe noe other talke, then that which is neceſſary and conuenient.

6. Shee may not ſuffer any to execute her Office, but onely that Religious whom the Superiour shall appoynte.

7. Shee may receaue noe writing or meſſage to bee ſent to any, except the Abbeſſe, Prioreſſe, or Conuent bee acquaynted ther with, except it bee to bee ſent and addreſſed to the Bishopp, or Viſitours, as hereafter in the third parte, and firſt Chapter shalbee declared.

THE

THE XII. CHAPTER.

Of the Chantresse.

1. ALL the bookes that appertayne to the Quiar must bee in the Custody of the Chauntresse, whoe must haue care that in their singing and reading, the hearers may bee edifyed, and euery weeke vppon Wednesday shee shall sett vp a Paper, wherein there names are to bee written, that in the weeke following must sing, or reade any thing in the Quiar, Shee must make choyce of the more skillfull according to the solemnitie of the Feasts, and in all things lett her take that Course and methode in her proceedings, that shee bee not ouer greiueous or troublesome to any.

2. Euery weeke vppon Saterday lett her sett vpp in writing the Order of the Office for the weake following, and withall the extraordinary obligations, both for the liuing and the dead; for which cause shee must haue the keeping of that booke wherein the sayd Obligations are contayned.

3. Lett her bee very wary and Circumspect before shee begin to sing, or intone any thing, and lett her vse the same waryneſſe in euery thing els, that if any error happen shee may seeke to amend it with Zeale, yet without any signe of impatience, soe farr as shee can possibly.

4. If they shall sing any thing in Musicke in the Church, those are to bee appoynted by her (or by some other who perhapps may bee fitter for this Office) that must sing, neither may any other presume to sing, but such, as by her are appoynted.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

Of the Sacristane.

1. THE Sacristane must bee very diligent to see that what soeuer belongeth to the Church, Cloyster, Chapter house, and Sacristy bee kept very carefully and han somely.

2. Lett her carefully prouide that the wine which must seruc for the most holy Sacrifice, bee good and pure and drawne the same day; that the Chalices, Purificatoryes,

toryes, Corporalls, Cruetts, Water, Towells and all the furniture and appurtenances of the Church, bee whole and very cleane, shee must carry holywater to the Cells, and the accustomed places of the Monastery, where euery weeke shee must put it into Vessells, that there are appoynted to conteyne the same.

3. Lett her appoynte the tyme when euery one is to goe to Confession, by the aduise of the Abbesse, and lett her see that all the Masses bee sayd in fitt tymes, if they haue sundry Prists to celebratt. Lett her make the hosts as fayre as shee can possibly, which shee must prouide may bee sufficient for the Masses, and the Communicants, and shee must see that shee allwayes haue them in readynesse, as neede may require.

4. Shee must kepe the kyes of the Turne, and Grate of the Church, or Sacristy, neither may shee receaue or deliuer any thing by them, but onely such things as appertayne to the Aultar, the holy Sacrifices, or Church, lett her see that this grate or Turne bee allwayes well shutt and locked, except in tymes of Communion, or when any thing is to bee deliuered, or receaued by the same.

5. Shee must not speake or talke with any at the Grate, but onely about those things that necessaryly appertayne to her Office and if any Externe demande any thing of her which concerneth not immediately the Church, lett her send him to the Tourier, and when shee speaketh with any at her Turne or Grate, lett her doe it with a low voyce, and lett her bee still ready to deliuer those things, which belong to the Seruice of the Church.

6. Shee must deliuer euery Euening to the Abbesse, the keyes of her Office, and in the morning lett her demaunde them of her at a competent tyme.

7. See that with due care and Dilligence shee write downe in some booke all such donations, as haue beene made to the Church, togeather with the names of the giuers, and shee must take an Inuentory of all such things as are committed to her charge.

THE

THE XIV. CHAPTER.

Of the Infirmaire.

1. THE Infirmayre must assist the sicke with singuler Charitie, and seeke to procure their confort accordingly; wherefore shee must endeauour to performe all those things, that may tend to the ease and comfort of the diseased, with very great alacritie.

2. About the sicke all things must bee neat, and decent, and the Infirmaire must haue an Inuentory of all such things, as belong to her Office.

3. Shee must haue all medicinable things and what soeuer els are neceessary for the sicke in some conuenient place, and shee must often visitt them, to see that nothing bee corrupted, and to procure by Order from the Superiour that new bee had in due tyme.

4. If the disease soe require it, lett her send for the Phisition, yet with the consent of the Abbesse, and lett her punctually obserue his prescriptions, and ordinations, concerning the dieet and Phisicke of the Patient, she

must alsoe haue certayne common Rules and instructions, according to which shee may proceede, when the disease seemeth not to require the presence or aduise of the Phisition.

5. If the disease increase lett the Abbesse bee certifyed thers of, that other Phisitions bee sent for in due tyme, if it seeme needefull, or if the disease bee infectiue, that others bee for bidden to haue accesse to the diseased, or to conuerse with her.

6. If the Sicke bee in any danger shee must prouide that in fitt tyme they bee armed with the holy Sacraments, and assisted whith the deuoute prayers of the Religious and withall may bee excited with holy admonitions to endure patiently the greife of their disease, and willingly to embrace the will of almighty God in all things.

7. Some holy Pictures and Images must bee had in the Infirmary, and shee must see that a Table bee decently adorned and prepared when the most blessed Sacrament is to bee brought thither, and shee is to make it ready and to prepare all other necessaryes for the Communion of the sicke, soe often as the ghostly Father shall thinke it expedient, that they communicate.

8. Shee may not change or omitt any thing

thing that the Phisition hath appoynted, except some euident reason moue her to the contrary; and lett her haue a booke where in all must bee sett downe that hee prescribeth.

9. Whensoeuer the Phisition or Surgeon commeth to the Monastery, by some signe the Conuent shalbee aduertised of their comming, that if any haue needs of their helps, by the Superiours licende they may come vnto them.

10. When the Ghostly Father, the Phisition, or Surgeon enter the Infirmary, shee or some other, with a Companion, must bee present, who shall neuer depatte out of the place, till they bee thence departed.

11. Shee must not dismisse those that are on their Recouery, till shee see the strong and able to vndergoe their accustomed labour.

12. Shee must haue a Care that they obserue due modesty, whyle they are vnder her charge, lest that whyle they seeke to restore their corporall strenght, they loose their Zeale and Spirit, yet they shall not soe much imploy themselues in their meditations and deuotions as before, vntill that they may bee able to retourne to their former Exercises, in perfect health, and with-

out any inconuenience.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

Of the Guarderobe.

1. THE Guarderobe muſt keepe all ſuch Cloathes as the Religious doe not vſe: as alſoe all linnen, and woollen which are applied to their bedding or to any other Monaſticall vſes, the which shee muſt diligently looke vnto, as to thoſe things which are belonging to the poore.

2. Shee muſt keepe an accompt of all ſuch things that are vnder her charge, as of all thoſe things whereof the Religious haue the vſe, and if shee bee to make prouiſion for any, either in linnen or in Woollen, let her acquainte the Lady Abbeſſe therewith, neither may shee deliuer to any a new garment, or any thing els that is new, without the conſent of the Lady Abbeſſe.

3. Let her haue great care of cleanelyneſſe, and handſomeneſſe, and shee muſt haue commodious places, to lay vpp thoſe things that appertayne to her cuſtody, the which shee muſt looke vnto, that by noe meanes they bee ſpoyled.

4. When

4. When shee deliuereth out any thing to bee washed, or which is already washed, shee must deliuer them by accompt, and by accompt shee must receaue them backe againe; alsoe all such things as are deputed, for the vse either of the Refectory or of the kitchin, and when shee deliuereth any linnen or Woollen to the Religious, shee must deliuer them on Saterday, and shee shall keepe written what and when, and to whom, any thing is deliuered, that euery one may receaue their necessaryes in due season.

5. Lett her seperate and keepe a parte that which is new, from that which is ould, and put euery thing in their seuerall places, and distinguish by certeyne figures or numbers, what soeuer is granted for the penticuler vse of each Religious. But if any thing cannot bee accommodated for the vse of the Religious, lett her make the Abbesse know thereof, that shee may dispose thereof accordingly.

6. Shee shall haue care to see that the Garments bee mended, and shee shall at the appoyntment of the Superiours deliuer them to bee mended by those whom the Superiour shall please to name.

7. Shee must haue care of all their Shooes, and

and shee must see that they bee mended in due tyme, and new must bee giuen to euery one, according to their necessitie and as the Superiour shall appoynte.

8. In her Office lett her carry her selfe meeke and gentle, neither must shee suffer any to endure any Want in Clothing and Garments.

9. Shee must eschew and auoyde all noueltie, secularitie, and Curiositie in all things and therefore a certayne Patterne of their habbits, Vayles, and other garments, must bee made and prescribed, the which shee must keepe in her Office of the Guardroabe, shee and all the rest shall bee bound and obliged to obserue this fashion, neither may any bee soe bold, as to presume to make, or fashion, or haue any thing but according to the sayd Patterne, according vnto which euery thing must bee precisely made and accommodated.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

Of the Conuerse Sisters.

1. THE Conuerse Sisters are admitted into this Congregation, that by their pious labours they may serue their God and Crea-

Creator, and that they may assist those, whoe haue dedicated themselues to his holy Seruice, and soe serue with them the selfe same soueraigne Lord, vnder the selfe same Statutes; Rules and Sacred Vowes; therefore they must endeauour to draw that spirituall profitt and commoditie from their sayd Labours, in such sort that they may fully accomplish all their ymployments to the glory of almightie God, and to the Saluation of their owne Soules.

2. The Conuerse Sisters (being noe lesse Religious then are those of the Quier) must in like sort bee prouided for in all things that appertayne to ther spirituall and Corporall good: as both aliue and dead they enioy all those Graces, and prouiledges which the others enioy, onely those excepted, which speciall and perticuler exception is made in the Statutes, whereof, by reason of their sundry imployments, businesses, and impediments that are incident to their estate, they cannot bee capable.

3. They must know that all such Statutes, that any wise touch the Religious of the Quier doe alsoe appertayne vnto them, soe farr forth as by their State they may bee accommodated vnto them.

4. They vnto whom any perticular Offices

ces are inioyned must receaue their speciall directions from their Superiour in writing, the which they must haue sett vpp in the places of their Offices.

5. Euery day they must attend to mentall and vocall prayer, for soe long a tyme as the Superiour shall appoynte them, which may bee longer or shorter as their Labours, and busineses will permitt them. If they shall perceaue that they are not soe apt for mentall prayer as they might wish, let them acquaint their ghostly Father therewith that they may imploy the tyme of prayer in some other exercise of deuotion.

6. Lett them pay to our Lord God a dayly taske and oblation of their Prayers, to witt for their Nocturnes and Mattins, they shall say thirty *Patet Nosters*, and soe many *Aue Marias*; for their Prime, Third, Sixt, None, and Compline, for each of these seuen *Pater Nosters*, and seuen *Aue Marias*; and they shall recite the sayd *Pater nosters* and *Aue Marias* twlue tymes ouer, in stead of their Euensong; But they that are able, and can finde leisure may say the Office of our blessed Lady, or of the dead, or the seuen penitentiall Psalmes, with the Litanies, insteed of those *Pater nosters* and *Aue Marias* prescribed.

7. They that are admitted for Conuerse

Sisters

Sisters, after they haue made their Profes-sion, may neuer passe to the State of the Professed of the Quier, and therefore they may not learne to sing, read or write, nor yet may they bee taught to doe the some.

8. They may vse all religious freedome with their Superiours, for which cause they may confidently repayre vnto them if they want any thing, or in their labours finde them selues ouercharged aboue ther strengthes, and both Superiour as also all the rest must loue them as their most deare Sisters, and carry them selues towards them in all Charitie, beneuolence, and true louing affection.

9. If at any tyme the Nouices bee sent by their Mistresse, or the Professed of the Quiar by the Superiour to serue in the kitching or such like places, the Conuerse must soe seeke to direct them in their labours, that withall they carry them selues towards them with all religious gentlenesse humilitie and discretion, neither may they take more vppon them then is meete in their proceedings or speeckes, but they must with sweetnesse teach them, when they see any thing worthy to bee amended in them, but in those things which appertayne not to their Offices, lett them in forme their Superiours

perfons of them.

10. Let them auoyde all bitterneſſe among them ſelues, but rather lett them ſeeke to nourish that mutuall charitie, which bee ſeemeth them, lett them behaue themſelues with all obedience towards their Superiours, whom they muſt reuerence in moſt humble manner, the Religious of the Quier they muſt honour and reſpect each one according to that Eſtate where in ſhee is.

11. They muſt bee very dilligent and warry that there happen noe danger by their Fyre or Candle in the places of their Offices, they muſt ſee that all things bee neate and cleanely, they muſt haue a noate of all ſuch things as are deliuered to their vſe and Cuſtody, that they may make a due accompt and reckoning of all things when it ſhall bee required of them.

12. They muſt bee very carefull and dilligent that nothing bee vnprofitably waſted or ſpoyled in their Offices, they muſt alſoe bee very great louers of Pouerty, and in all the places of their labours they muſt ſpeake very ſparingly, and for the moſt parte of things neceſſary, and then they muſt ſpeake with a ſubmiſſiue and lowe Voyce.

THE

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

Of those that are admitted in to the Monastery to receaue the Habitt, and to make holy Vowes, and Profession of Religion.

1. AS the Conditions and dispositions of those are, that are admitted into this Congregation, such alsoe will the whole Congregation bee, therefore with great choyce must they admitt such as offer themselues to the Congregation, lest by admitting such that are vnfitt their spirituall progresse and vigour of disciplyne fall and decay:

2. Therefore they are especially to bee admitted into this Congregation, whoe haue giuē some shew or proofe of their Vertuous life, in the places of their education and former Conuersation, and whose reputation was alwayes held for good, whyle they liued in the World.

3. They that are notably defectiue either in body or mynde may not bee admitted,

nor they that are in danger of continuall ſickneſſe, the Abbeſſe and the Conuent muſt bee Iudges whether they bee in theſe things defectiue: but yet where there may bee any doubt or queſtion, they muſt ſeeke for the Counſayle of thoſe, whoſe Iudgment and experience may aſſiſt them in theſe matters.

4. Widdowes, Siſters, or ſuch as are neere of bloode, may not bee receaued without great, Cauſe, nor they very eaſely whoe haue had gouerment ouer others in the world, and were ſubordinate to none, becauſe ſuch are not gouerned but with great difficultie.

5. They that are entred into the lawfull bond of Matrimony, although they haue not conſummated the ſame; may not obtayne admittance without very great waryneſſe and deliberation, nor they whoe haue beene ſuſpected to take vppon them this State of life, by the hard and vnkinde vſage and dealing of their Frends, wherefore if any ſuch ſhall enter, and ſhall conceale theſe things, they muſt know that they cannot continew in the Monaſtery, if theſe things doe afterwards come to light; but if the Conuent ſhall ſee any ſomewhat conſtrayned herevnto, and proceede afterwards according

according to a true and an assured spiritt of Religion, shee may bee admitted, after shee hath yealded due prose and experienteof her sincere Vocation.

6. Shee that is vnlawfully begotten or is held for such, ought not to bee admitted, except some reason of especiall moment may bee alleadged for her, which reason must bee aproued by the most Voyces of the Religious, before shee bee permitted to enter in.

7. Shee that is in debt or in Processe, may not enter, vntill the debt bee payed, and the Processe ended.

8. Shee that hath receaued the Habitt of another Religious Order, or hath liued in any Monastery of this Order, that obserue not these Statutes and hath there receaued the Habitt of Religion may not bee taken into this Congregation, except vppon most important Reasons.

9. None may easely bee receaued that are aboue seuen and twentie yeares old, yet if they bee such that are expert in reading and song, and are knowne to bee of strong and healthy bodys, they may bee admitted, although they bee thirty yeares ould.

10. For as much as the impediments of those that seeke to enter among you may

bee often very ſecrett, and hard to bee knowne, lett her that offereth her ſelfe to this Congregation bee demaunded, if shee haue any ſuch impediments, whether shee bee able to paſſe with the common dyett, whether shee bee often or ſeldome ſicke, and what ſickneſſe that may bee, of what health or ſtrenght shee findeth her ſelfe for the preſent, whether their parents had any diſeaſe, which may bee feared to bee hereditary vnto her, whether shee bee ſubiect to any Obligation vppon any contract whatſoeuer, whether shee hath publikely celebrated any ſpowſales, or plighted her promiſe of mariage to any man, of all which the Congregation muſt bee planely and perticulerly informed.

11. Further more shee muſt bee demaunded what it was that induced her to haue this deſire, why shee rather deſireth to bee in this Conuent then of another. If perhappes, for that shee hath here of her kindred, or ſome Siſter, or Cozens in the Congregation, who might much inclyne her here vnto, or for the place, Country, or Education, moreouer it muſt Bee inquired of her whether shee bee content to bee ymployed in the baſer ſort of labours, and to bee perpetually exerciſed there in according to

her

her State and degree, whether shee bee resolued to endure those things which may helpe to bring her to humilitie, patience, and contempt of her selfe, what qualities shee hath, what difficulties shee hath suffred in making her Resolution, finally what shee hath to dispose of, and what satisfaction shee hath giuen to her Frends, out of all which, if the Abbesse and Prioresse (whoe are both seuerally to examine those that would enter) can draw any thing that may seeme worthy of great deliberation, they shall remitt it to the Iudgement of the whole Conuent.

12. They that after their entrance giue litle hope of their good proceeding in Spiritt, must bee dismissed in good tyme, but with great Charitie, but they that yeald some hope, and yet not soe certayne and assured as may bee wished, their clothing may bee soe long deferred vntill the Conuent bee sufficiently satisfied, yet the Conuent is not bound vppon Charitie to retayne, and mayntayne such among them whoe may rather bee a burthen vnto them then that they are like to make that proffitt in spiritt which they should.

13. A certayne number of Religious as alsoe of the whole family must bee appoynted,

ted, according to their certayne temporall meanes and Reuenewes, neither may they admitt more then their Ordinary Reuenewes or Almes are able well to entertayne and nourish.

14. None may bee admitted to bee either of the Quier, or a Conuerse, vppon indiscreete pitty and Compassion; as neither that person ought to bee admitted to bee of the Conuent, whoe hath not a mynde to vndergoe, and endure what soeuer is according to Religion.

15. The Schollers must haue a Vayle deliuered them, before they can bee permitted to come to the Quiar, or Refectory as alsoe a certayne kinde of habitt conuenient to the state and Vocation.

16. Such as are admitted must ordinarely haue a whole yeare before they receaue the holy Habitt of Religion, if it happen otherwise that this tyme bee either preuented or prolonged, lest the Conuent approue the Cause and Reason, that afterwares it may not happen to bee turned in to a Custome.

17. Shee that is admitted may not vrge, or bee to ernest to receaue the Habitt, but let her onely shew her propension, and good desire to proceede in her holy course, and

leaue

leaue the reſt to the diſpoſition of the Conſent.

18. They ſhall admitt none to receaue the holy habitt of Religion, before ſhee bee twelue yeares ould, nor may they permitt her to make her Profeſſion before ſhee bee ſixteene yeares old full compleate according to that which is decreed in the holy Counſayle of Trent, in the twentie fift Seſſion and in the fourth Chapter; and ordinarily lett none bee receaued, that after two yeares cannot make her Profeſſion.

19. The Schollers and Nouices muſt liue in ſilence ſeperated from the reſt, at leſt for the ſpace of eight dayes before their Cloathing and Profeſſion that they may ſeriouſly and maturely conſider of the greatneſſe of the matter they are to take in hand; againe after three dayes are expired after their cloathing, they muſt retourne to their former ſilence, for at leſt eight dayes more, that they may well ponder and caſt with them, by what meanes they may beſt with fruyte vſe that benefitt of god his holy Grace and fauour which hee hath beſtowed vppon them and how they may Zealouſly accomplish thoſe things, which to the honor and ſernice of God they had before purpoſed and determyned with themſelues.

20. The place of Recreation for the Schollers and Nouices must bee different from that of the professed; neither yet may they conuerse with those, whoe although they liue in the Monastery, yet are not there with intention and purpose to bee Religious, except for someryme the Abbesse ordayne otherwise.

21. They must not ordinaryly bee admitted to make their Profession before they bee eighteene yeares ould, although reason may sometyme perswade the contrary; as when their Iugdments and forwardnesse may supply the defect of their yeares, and shee that after the yeare of her Probation is found vnfitt must bee dismissed.

22. All the Religious must receaue from the Mistris of the Nouices information, concerning the dispositions, Vertues, and aptnesse, of the Schollers, and Nouices, especially when otherwise they cannot haue sufficient notice and knowledge thereof; But as touching the Conuerse Sisters, they must inquire of the Celarier, concerning what soeuer may occur touching them.

23. When the Religious deliberate among themselues in Chapter concerning the admission of any either to the habiti or profession the Sister or kinswoman of the party within the third degree (yea although it bee

the Abbesse her selfe) may not bee present, as neither the Mistris of the Nouices, or Cellarier, whyle the Religious doe there debate among themselues concerning those that are vnder their seuerall charges, yet they must bee present when by balloting they all are to deliuer their suffrages and Voyces. The Suffrages of the Religious for those that are to bee admitted for cloathing or Profession, must not bee deliuered by writing, but by Bowles, and they that are to bee admitted must haue more then halfe the Voyces of the Cõuent, and the Cõuent must giue these their Voyces some six Weekes before their Cloathing ād Professiõ, but especially before the Professiõ, that the Lord Bishopp or his deputy may bee certifyed in fitt tyme of those that are to bee admitted, that hee may examyne thē according to that which is decreed in the fifte ād twety Sessiõ of the holy Counsell of Trent.

24. They must dispose of al things that any wyse appertayne vnto them, before the day of their Profession, and if they shall not bee found fitt, all what soeuer was any wayes bestowed vppon the Monastery must bee rendred to them backe againe, as in the holy Counsayle of Trent, in the 25. Session and 16. Chapter is enacted.

25. After the Profession the Mistris shall

informe the Prioreſſe of their natures and diſpoſitions, ſoe farr forth as it is conuenient for her to know them, and after their Nouitiate shee shall ordinarely leaue them to the Prioreſſe to diſpoſe of them and to bee ſubiect vnto her in all things, in ſuch ſort as the reſt of the Profeſſed for the Quier are.

26. If at any tyme young Children bee receaued into the Monaſtery for their education, let that bee done with great choyce and in regard of a greater good, and whoſe good education (in regard of thoſe things which paſſe in Religion) may proue to aduance them to a greater good: they may not bee receaued before they are ſeuen yeares old, and they may not bee retayned in the Monaſtery after they are paſt fifteene, they may not bee admitted with any burthen to the Monaſtery, excepted it bee otherwiſe ſufficiently prouided for.

27. Whyle theſe Children liue in the Monaſtery they may not bee curiouſly cloathed or adorned, but the Habitt which they are to vſe muſt bee decent, and fitly beeſeeming the place; they may not conuerſe with the Schollers, Nouices, or Profeſſed, but as the Lady Abbeſſe and Prioreſſe shall giue them leaue, neither may they ſpeake or haue

haue any Conuerſation with ſuch as come vnto them from abroade, and when this latter shalbee permitted them, let them doe it at a certayne Grate, that muſt bee peculiarely appoynted for them, and they muſt allwayes haue there ſome graue Religious ordinarely to accompany them, and to bee present with them.

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THE THIRD PARTE.

OF THOSE MATTERS that are more extrinsecally and externally appertayning to the Congregation, and Monastery, and are belonging to the Temporalities of the same.

AT GANT.

Printed by Ioos Dooms. 1632.

THE THIRD PART

OF THOSE MATTERS

that are more externally and externally appertaining to the Congregation, and Monastery, and are belonging to the Temporalties of the Same.

THE FIRST. CHAP:

Of the Visitor, and Visitation of the Monastery.

1. THE Abbesse with her Conuent shall propose to the Bishopp, that hee would vouchsafe to appoynte and constitute some one Visitor of the Monastery, whose authoritie shall wholly in all things depend of the Bishopp; and the place of his ordinary residence must bee at the most but one dayes Iourney from the Monastery, and he must yearely make a visitation of the monastery and that must bee within the Feasts of S. Iohn Baptist, and of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin Mary, if it can possibly bee soe.

2. If at any tyme the Visitation cannot bee made at the ordinary appoynted tymes, the Abbesse shall certify the Conuent of the hindrance, and when the tyme of the Visitation approacheth; shee must vse that forme of writing to the Visitour, which is sett downe in the booke of Ceremonyes.

3. The Conuent must chouse one that is skillfull in the practise of Religion, and is a Religious man, who may assist at the Visitation. And because the Abbesse is likelyest best to know who may bee most fitt for this purpose, after shee hath deliberated of the matter with her Assistants, shee shall propose two or three to the Conuent, leauing free vnto them to chuse one of them or some other, as may seeme meetest to them.

4. During the Visitation all must yeald their accustomed obedience to the Abbesse, and other Superiors, in those things that appertayne to ordinary disciplyne, neither may they require of the Visitor leaue to doe any thing before they haue first warned the Abbesse thereof.

5. The Abbesse must deliuer a noate of all the names of her Religious and Family to the Bishopp or Visitor, when hee commeth to visitt, and shee must write downe what Office, euery one beareth in the Monastery.

6. To the end that euery one with better aduise may declare to the Visitor their mynds, and difficulties, they shall deliuer vnto him in writing what they would say vnto him. And all must haue free accesse

to the Visitor, that in any sort appertayne to the Monastery. But they that cannot write, may explicate to him their myndes by word of Mouth.

7. They shall auoyde and fly all kinde of exagerations in those things that they write and propounde, and they shall onely make a naked Relation of the matter, and they must maturely ponder with themselues, whether their Superiors could not haue sufficiently of themselues amended and reformed those things which they declare vnto the Visitor or whether at leastwise the Superiors vnderstoode the case, that they might thereby haue prouided some remedy for it.

8. Those things that are to bee conferred about whith the Visitor (besides that which of himselfe he may enquire or examen) may bee reduced to these heads. The defects of good obseruation of the Rule, or Statutes, those things that belong to Chastitie, Pouerty, Obedience, and Clausure. to much Conuersation with seculer people, danger of scandale, occasion either offered or permitted of breach of peace, and disunion of myndes, want of necessaryes for their life and dyett, comming from those whoe of duty should haue mad due

prouision, vnprofitable expences and exceſſe in any thing: notable defectes in the Abbeſſe, ghoſtly Father, Chaplaynes, or in the reſt of the Superiours, Officers, and whatſoeuer els may ſeeme to bee greatly hurtfull to the good of the Monaſtery.

9. The bookes of accomptes, and the ſome of the Prouiſion they haue made, muſt bee shewed to the Viſitor, as vnto him alſoe muſt bee declared, what is lett, and in what manner and by whoſe ayde and aſſiſtance, more ouer hee muſt ſee the Orders left them by former Viſitours, and eſpecially thoſe of the laſt Viſitation (if any thing were left in writing) all which their Orders and Ordinations are to bee committed to writing, but yet they may not bee ioyned to the Statutes, becauſe they are to bee thought onely ſuch things, as are onely accommodated to certayne tymes and perſons.

10. If any would deliuer her Complaynte to the Viſitor, lett her ſee that shee doe it vppon a good ground, freing her mynde from all Paſſion, and shee muſt onely mention thoſe things that are of moment. If anything bee found to bee deuiſed, or to diſcouer in them any notable Paſſion, the

offendor

offendor must expect a good Pennance (which the Visitour is to impose) according to her deserues.

11. If any Complaynte should bee deliuered vpp against the Abbesse, or any of the Superiors, or of the Religious, the accused may neither directly or indirectly, goe about to finde out the Authors of the sayd Complaynte; neither may shee shew any signe of any greife or disgust against any, if by any circumstances she may thinke that she haue discouered the Author thereof.

12. When the Visitor entreth in to the Incloſure the Abbesse, Prioresse, and Assistants shall allwayes accompany him, whyle there hee remayneth, neither may they conceale any thing from him, which hee ought to see, or wherewith hee ought to bee acquainted.

13. None may tell vnto any other any thing that the Visitor inquired of her, or where of hee examined, neither shall shee signify her suspicion of any thing that was sayd, or done with the Visitor, and if by any meanes the sayings, or doings of others shall happen to come to her knowledge, shee may not bewray it to any other, except the Visitor giue her leaue, vnder

payne of being disabled to all offices afterwards and of other punishment which the Visitor shall please to enioyne.

14. What soeuer shallbee suggested or ordayned by the Visitour the Abbesse and Conuent must receaue with due reuerence; neither may they directly or indirectly make their recourse to any other seculer or ecclesiasticall person, but to him selfe or his Assistant (before named) or to the Bishopp, or his Superior; and if at any tyme any shall dare to seeke for remedy of those things, that belong to the Office of the Visitour and Bishopp, by seeking to any seculer or Ecclesiasticall Princes, or Magistrates, the Abbesse and Conuent shall iudge and condemne such for vnquiett persons, for as much as they trouble the common peace of the Conuent, and soe punish them by separating and debarring them from the Conuersation of the rest.

15. If any of the Professed would at any tyme write to the Bishopp or Visitour, shee shall haue free liberty to doe the same, and shee may deliuer her letters to the Thourier, who may not (vnder payne of losse of actiue and passiue Voyce for euer, and of other punishments which by the Chapter may bee enioyned her) discouer to any, that euer

shee

shee receaued any such letters to bee addressed vnto them, except the Religious that deliuered them vnto her, doe leaue it in her freedome and discretion; what shee receaued to bee sent vnto them, shee must see that shee deliuereth to a fayth full Messenger, or to him whoe is esteemed such an one, soe that it will not bee likely that the sending of such letters will euer come to the notice of the Superiors, or of others by his meanes.

16. Neither may the Abbesse or any other Superiors either Directly, by any wayes, signes or outward shew of Countenances, hinder the free writing of their Religious to their Superiors (to witt the Bishopp or Visitour) vnder payne of suspention from their Offices, and other greater penalties to bee inflicted on them by the Bishopp.

THE II. CHAPTER.

Of the Family of the Monastery and of such as liue out of the Inclosure.

1. THE Monastery must haue for their Ghostly Fathers such as are modest, prudent, and learned, and first the Conuent must bee well informed of their

sufficiency, Vertue, and honesty before they are to bee admitted; alsoe their Chaplaynes, Phisitions, and Chirurgions, must bee of modest life and good fame.

2. The Conuent must entertayne noe seruant that is not modest, or is noted for any perticuler cryme, or in his apparell and outward cariage is lighter then reason would.

3. All these Seruants must goe to Confession and the holy Communion once euery Moneth, and they must obserue all such Ordinances, as they shall receaue from the Abbesse, Visitor, or the Cellarier.

4. Noe woman of what soeuer State, dignitie or Condition shee may bee, can bee permitted to liue or dwell with those of the family: that all occasion of ill suspition and badd toungs may bee wholly take away.

5. Hee that is chosen for the Steward or Procurator of the Monastery by the Conuent, must bee such a one, as is graue, godly, prudent, and hee must not bee charged with wife, or Children, hee must dilligently attend to the Affayres of the Monastery, procuring still the proffitt thereof, with the good edification of such abroade as hee dealeth with all and the Abbesse and the Conuent must bee assured of his honesty,

sty, and fidelitie, in those things that are committed to his care and disposition.

6. Hee must bee obedient in all things to those Officers that haue authoritie from the Abbesse to commaunde him, and hee must haue some certayne howers, where in hee must repayre vnto them, but especially to the depositair, and Cellarier, vnto whom the care of the dayly prouisiones doe principally belong.

7. Hee must haue a booke where in hee is to sett downe all his receipts and expences, and once a weeke hee must receaue of the depositair, that which shall suffice for the necessary prouisions of that weeke; and when hee receaueth any money, hee must deliuer her a Bill where in hee shall acknowledge the receipt and for what vse hee receaued it.

8. Hee is to vnderstand that hee can take nothing vppon creditt, without the leaue of the Abbesse deliuered him in writing, except for some matter of litle moment, and hee shall incontinently pay for what hee receaueth, or take care that it bee payd, neither may hee euer bee debtor for aboue twentie Florens, except the Abbesse and depositayre bee consenting there vnto.

9. If hee shall receaue any money due to

to the Monastery, vppon what title soeuer, hee must deliuer it vpp presently to the depositayre and of her receaue an Acquittance for the receipt there of.

10. Hee may not vndertake noe Processe or call any into law without the knowledge of the Abbesse and Conuent; and if att any tyme hee shall vndertake any such matter, hee must demaund the Counsayle of such as are skillfull, whose aduise hee may follow, and before any Suytes bee commenced (hauing first acquainted the Superiour there with) lett him offer to put the matter to agreement, and Compremise.

11. Hee must often render an accompt to the Abbesse of those things, where in hee dealeth, and hee must like a good and faythfull Seruant in forme her of all such things, as hee thinketh wilbee profitable for the Monastery, and hee must suggest vnto her at what tymes all Prouisions are to bee made, that by these meanes, Costs and Charges may bee moderated; and lett him see that what hee buyeth bee good and profitable for the Monastery.

12. Hee shall certify the Abbesse of whatsoeuer hee findeth to want neede of reparation; and if hee shall thinke any thing fitt to bee sould, or otherwise to bee imployed,

lett him not attempt any ſuch thing without her knowledge, or in leſſer matters, without at leaſt the knowledge of the depoſitayre.

13. Lett none bee admitted to eate with the Chaplaynes or Seruants without the Conſent of the Abbeſſe, who muſt not grant eaſely hoſpitalitie to ſeculer people (except ſome ſinguler obligation require the ſame) and then lett it bee done in ſome place without the Bowndes and Circuit of the Monaſtery, where notwithſtanding due regard and care muſt bee hadd of religious Frugalitie.

14. The Steward muſt not permitt that any thing bee vnprofitably ſpent and conſumed, and if any thing bee ouerplus, lett him take care that it bee brought backe againe, to bee kept for thoſe vſes the Superiors ſhall approue; and hee muſt haue care of all the Seruants, and muſt dilligently ſee that euery one doe their duty and that they liue not idlely.

15. At what tyme ſoeuer hee requireth of the depoſitayre any Originall Writings, Regiſters, Charters, or other Inſtruments, lett him ſett downe in writing that hee receaued them from her, vppon ſuch a day, which writing ſhee muſt deliuer againe vnto

ynto him, when hee hath restored the affore sayd things.

THE III. CHAPTER.

Of bestowing and letting the Goods of the Monastery.

1. WHatsoeuer is giuen to the Monasteryes vse, through the pious liberalitie of good people, is to bee esteemed as applyed to Christ our Lord, or to the Religious as his poore membres, that thereby being freed from all care of temporall mattets, they may the better attend to the Seruice of his diuine Maiesty; and therefore they must interprett that whatsoeuer temporall goods they haue, or receaue, they must imploy in such sort as may best stand with the honour of God, and may seeme to bee most agreable to the Intention of the giuers.

2. If the Rents of the Monastery, and donations of good people should grow to that greateneſſe, that, (the number of the persons liuing in the Monastery, and the difficulties which may happen well considered) they may seeme superfluons or not

neces-

neceſſary, nor decent for a Religious State; then the Abbeſſe with the conſent of the Conuent may apply them to ſome pious vſes, as to the ſuſtentation of poore families, bringing vpp of poore Schollers in learning and all ſuch like godly workes, as may beſt aduance the good of Religion and ſeruice of God.

3. The Abbeſſe her ſelfe and by her owne authority, may diſpoſe of thoſe things that are of leſſer valew, or giue ſome things in way of gratitude, yet ſhall shee ſett downe in a booke, what, to whom, and to what end, shee hath giuen any thing, that it may bee shewed to the Viſitor if it ſhould ſeeme neceſſary.

4. The Abbeſſe may not giue vppon colour and prætext of Seruice done, more then Iuſtice beeſeeming a Religious State may exact. And if at any tyme any peculier Conſideration bee to bee had of ſome perticuler perſon, and that ſome notable thing is to bee added to his wages, lett that bee done by the conſent of the Conuent.

5. The Abbeſſe muſt haue in her keeping a Regiſter of all the Lord shipps, landes, and poſſeſſions of the Monaſtery, and of the yearely Reuenew which shee draweth from euery one of them, what was receaued when

when they were last let, whether any posses-sion bee lett for terme of yeares, together with the names of such persons as occupy them.

6. The Abbesse may not lett any posses-sions of the Monastery, without the consent of the Conuent, whom shee must in forme how much they yeald yearely, and what the opinion of those that are most practicall in such affayres is here in, and lett such men bee herd by the Abbesse, Prioresse, and depositary, who are skillfull and of good Iudgment in such affayres, that the Conuent may bee the more fully informed, and soe may the better iudge there of, and let the Conuent vse such persons, whom none may suspect that they will draw any thing to their owne priuate lucre, and gaine, or to the benefitt of their Frends.

7. They must vnderstand that noe Eccle-siasticall goods can bee lett aboue the terme of nyne yeares, without the obseruation of such solemnities, as according to law are required, in the alienation of the Church goods, neither may any letting bee renued during the tyme of the former lease, more then for one yeare for the Tythes, and at most for three yeares in respect of other proffitts, before the end of the Rent that runneth,

neweth, neither may they take more then
ne Florens for an earnest penny, for re-
ewing of the sayd Rent.

9. If any lettings of such goods should
e made by anticipating the Rent before
and, they may noe wayes binde ther Succes-
sors, as is decreed in the 11. Chap of the 25.
session of the Counsayle of Trent. Therefore
if the Monastery will lett forth their posses-
sions for any long tyme, or bynde themsel-
ues for any money receaued; it must bee
done by them whoe according to law are
able to grant it.

10. In the Monastery nothing may bee made
by the Religious to bee sould, except ther
poverty want or necessitie drive the thereto.

11. If their Originall writings, Registers,
Instruments, and monuments should hap-
pen through ouldnesse, Rottennesse, or euill
keeping to bee spoyled or corrupted, the Ab-
besse and depositayre must take Care to haue
them authentically coppyed out, and well
kept, and if it happen that the sayd writings
are to bee communicated or shewed to any
lett him testify vnder his hand and writting
what hee hath receaued; neither may the
Abbesse and depositayre deliuer to any the
sayd publicke Instruments whithout the
Consent bee also assenting there vnto.

11. Those that are to perfect their writings must bee very fayth full, of whose honesty and fidelitie there may bee noe doubt, and the Conuent must haue certayne trusty Frends whom they may vse in this matter: neither is it conuenient that they commit their affayres and State, onely to hyrelings.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

Of the translation of the Religious from one Monastery to another.

1. THE translation or change of the Religious from one Monastery to another may not bee made, except very great reasons perswade the same; and the sayd reasons must bee allowed by the Bishopp and by the Conuent, from which they are sent, as also by that Conuent whether they are to goe, and it must bee very profitable for the peace and quiett, or at leastwise for the spirituall good of both.

2. None may deale either directly or indirectly: with any person about her owne translation; but onely with her Superiors, and that, onely by proposing the matter vnto them, but noe wayes vrging there vnto, that soe they may leaue it in their full liber-

tie

tie to determyne therein, what they shall thinke good.

3. When any new Monastery is to bee begunn, it shall ly in the power of the Abbesse and Conuent to make choyce of those persons that are to bee sent to the beginning there of.

4. When any of the Religious are sent to supply the want of another Monastery, it must bee done with the consent of the Bishopp, Abbesse, and Conuent, from whence they are taken, and when but one is granted, shee shall haue an other Religious to accompany her thither, and with her some graue matrone, with whom the sayd Religious may retourne backe againe, if shee bee to retourne backe againe.

5. When they are to goe from one Monastery to another, they must receaue in writing from the Bishopp, or the Visitor by what way they are to passe, neither may they goe out of that way, and they must allwayes repayre to the Religious houses especially of their owne Order and Congregation, if conueniently they may.

6. The Religious that is sent from one Monastery to another of the same Order and Congregation, shall make her Vou of Obedience in Chapter to the Bishopp and Abbesse where shee shall reside, and there

shee shall obserue all the laudable Custo-mes of the same place.

7. Shee that is sent shall haue her place in the Conuent according to the tyme of her Profession, and shee shall participate of all the priuiledges of the Monastery to which shee is sent; and if the day of her Profession, fall vppon the same in which some of the Monastery were professed, the, professed of that Monastery shall preside and haue the Prioritie.

8. Shee that is translated to another Monastery may not speake of any of the defects of any of that Conuent from which shee was translated, neither may shee extoll the Religious of one Conuent, that shee may seeme there by to detract or diminish any thing from the Credit of the other, and if shee perceaue any thing to bee in vse and obseruation in the other Monastery, which is not obserued in the Monastery where shee dwelleth, shee may propose it to the Visitor, Abbesse, or Superior but shee may neither directly or indirectly speake there of to the other Religious except from the affore sayd Superiors shee haue licence to doe the same.

9. Shee that for her greater peace and more perfection is sent to another Monastery

stery. if shee trouble the peace and quiett of that Monastery; and carry her selfe in trouble some manner, shee must bee sent backe againe to her former Conuent, that there the Superiours may soe dispose of her as in our Lord they shall thinke best for her owne good, as alsoe for the good of the Conuent.

THE V. CHAPTER.

Of the vnion and Combination of the Monasteryes of this Cougregation amongst themselues.

1. A Combination and vnion of diuers Monasteryes liuing vnder the same Rules and Statutes doth make very much for the increase of Religion, good discipline, and true Charity amongst those that liue in them; Therefore the Superiours of the seuerall Monasteryes of this Congregation must endeauour to nourish among themselues by their often mutuall correspondence, writing, and letters this pious Conjunction and charitable affection, whereby it will come to passe that where as the seuerall Conuents of this Congregation will

make one body among themselues by meanes of this Combination soe will they also be made partakers of all those priuiledges, graces and such like holy meritorious workes, which the rest either ioyntly or seuerally doe enioy or exercise.

2. Therefore these Monasteries liuing vnder the same Rule and Statutes, shall healpe and assist each the other, when they suffer any necessitie; as may happen through plagge, fier, vniust persecution, and the like; yet that must bee performed herein by each Monastery, which by the Iudgment of the right reuerend Lord Bishopp, and Visitor shalbee appoynted and determyned.

3. When soeuer any Monastery of this Congregation shall chance to bee vniustly wronged or oppressed, the rest shalbee obliged ioyntely to defend their right, and in the their common good, and they must diligently labor that what soeuer may appertayne to the spirituall or temporall good there of, they may by any good manner deliuer from the vniust assaults and oppressions of others.

4. The Religious by those Conuents with whom they haue this Society, must bee intertayned in their Monasteries, and they shall bee subiect to the Abbesse or Superior, soe long as they remayne therein.

5. If any Religious in this sort intertayned in any Monastery, should chance there to end her life, let that bee there performed concerning her buriall, which is accustomed to bee performed to those, that are resident in the same Monastery; But the Monastery from whence shee came, must fulfill those Masses, and suffrages for her Soule, which it doth for others.

6. When in any Monastery of the Congregation an Abbesse is to bee chosen, the other Monasteries whoe shall have notice of this election, shall sing procause to bee sayd a Masse of the holy Ghost for the same; and the Superiours shall write one to the other of the decease of such Religious as depart this life in their seuerall Monasteryes, that thereby they may bee made partakers of the merits, and deuoute prayers of their fellow Sisters.

7. Who soeuer is chosen Abbesse of any Monastery, must with all conuenient speed dition write to the other Abbesses of this Congregation; and shall offer them her assistance in all those things, that may any wayes concerne the spirituall and temporall common good of the whole Congregation.

8. The Monasteryes must depend vpon the first Monastery, from whence they

first proceeded, or to which they were conioyned by the admission of the same Statutes; soe that they must deferr the priorities to the same, and they shall beare it a peculier respect, and whatsoeuer (concerning Religious perfection) is done there in, the rest must follow and performe the same, framing and forming themselues to the imitation and gouernment there of.

9. If any Monastery by not obseruing fully the Statutes shalbe notably altred, and changed from the first, and soe from the rest, it shall bee deprined and loose all those priuiledges, which is enioyed by reason of this Vnion, except it recall and reserue it selfe.

10. If the first Monastery should notably fayle in disciplyne and Spirrit (which God forbidd) it shalbee deprined of the priuiledge of priority over the rest, and the priorities shalbee transferred to the second, and if that should in like sort proue defectiue then it must goe to the Third, and thus in all the rest, otherwise the priorities must stand according to the antiquitie of the Monasteryes, and of their vnion and Combination with the rest.

11. These are the Statutes and Constitutions of this Holy Congregation, compri-

sed

led for the more perfect and better observation and keepeing of the most holy Rule of the most glorious Father and Patriarch Saint BENEDICT, which all though they ought to bee of highe esteeme and authoritie with the Religious and Children of this Sodalitie; and conlequently to bee precisely kept by them, soe farr forth as their diuers and sundry regular imployments may require, or occasion may bee offered, yet they impose not further obligation vppon their Consciences, then the very nature of the things, and reason it selfe shall require or in force. yet they are greatly obliged in Conscience to observe those things that are appoynted touching the Election and deposition of the Abbesse as alsoe those things that concerne the Correction of most greuious faultes, where by any may deserue to bee seperated from the Company of the rest; moreouer euery one is obliged neuer to require or to permitt that more liberty bee admitted, then the Rule and the Statutes will yeald vnto: but if any thing bee brought in, or practised, which is not sett downe in the Rule or Statutes, that must bee to greater perfection and austeritie; and it shall onely belong to the right Reuerend the Lord Bis-

hopp, or Visitor, to explicate the sense and meaning of the words and Clauses contayned there in, if there may happen any doubt or Controuersy there in; to whose Verdict and Iudgment euery one must stand in this matter; therefore for as much as all the professed Religious in this Congregation ought to obserue all the Statutes according to that sense and meaning which the Bishopp or Visitor shall admitt (as hath beene sayd) none may bee suffered to make their Profession amoug you, whoe shall not first promise in the Chapter house (according to a certayne forme of writing sett downe in the booke of Ceremonyes) that they will accept of any reformation proceeding from the Bishopp conformable and agreable to the Rule and Statutes, and that they will not admit any greater liberty, then the Rule and Statutes will permitt and this their purpose sett downe in writing they shall confirme with their owne hand, and deliuer it to bee kept in the place of their other principall writings and monuments.

The End of the Statutes.

THE CONFIRMATION

THE STATUTE.

MATHIAS by the grace of God, and of the holy Sea Apostolike Arch Bishopp of Mechlin to our welbeloued Daughters in Christ the Abbesse and Conuent of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Order of S. Benedict residing in the City of Bruxelles subiect to vs by ordinary right health in our Lord. Although the Rule of the holy Father Saint Benedict which you professe bee written, and set downe with carefull diligence and

and wisedome, soe that it truly deserueth, and ought to bee estemed euen of it selfe to bee an absolute and perfect guide and directory of good life, to such as follow the same; Yet for as much as diuers preceptes there of are some what generall, and therefore are diuersly vnderstoode, and obserued by diuers, according to the diuersitie of their natures, and Countreyes, your pietie and zeale of perfection was such, that you made your humble supplication to the holy Father the Soueraigne Bishopp of Rome, that by vs you might haue certayne Statutes and Constitutions, in particular declaring the sayd Rule, to bee by vs deliuered to you, confirmed for you, and by our Commaundment to bee imposed vppon you that (as by the motion of Gods spirit you vehemently desire) you

may

may by them bee directed to the exact and vniforme obſeruation of the ſayd Rule; But wee knowing right well our owne imperfection, would not truſt only to our ſelues in this matter, but wee would vſe the helpe and Counſayle of diuers men well ſeene and experienced in Monaſticall manner of life, for the beſt compiling of theſe Statutes, yea and when they were ſoe compiled, wee would not ſoe haſtely commaunde you to keepe them except that firſt you had fully tryed for more then the ſpace of a whole yeare, whethere your humane and naturall infirmitie could obſerue them; after which your triall, when you had declared and made knowne to vs your promptitude and willing myndes, wee thought good to confirme them by the authoritie of the ſayd holy Fater delegated vnto vs for

this

this matter by a speciall Breue directed
vnto vs as by those our present letters
wee doe vow to confirme them; Commanding
you, and all your Successors
to obserue and keepe them perpetually
and inuiolably. In witnesse whereof wee haue
subsigned and signed these with our hand
and Seale in Bruxelles the seuen and
twentith of July Anno Dñi. 1612.

MATHIAS Archiepiscopus
Mechlinensis.

NOTE

NOTE that the wordes interliued in a diuers Carecter are onely obſerued by this monaſtery of Gand, by grant of his lordshipp whoe att leſt for the preſent iudged it fitter. For vs to ſinge our office ouer night and keepe onely one refectory though ſome for health are ordained to eate fleſh when the comunity eateth fish.